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Lydia, from
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Miss L. Bartlett.

THE

MODEL PRAYER.

A COURSE OF LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

BY GEORGE C. BALDWIN, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN," "REPRESENTATIVE MEN," "SERMONS," ETC., ETC.

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TO

"THE YOUNG MEN'S COVENANT BAND,"

AND

"THE YOUNG WOMEN'S COVENANT BAND,"

Of the First Baptist Church, Troy, N.Y.,

UNDER WHOSE AUSPICES THESE LECTURES WERE DELIVERED,

AND AT WHOSE REQUEST THEY ARE PUBLISHED,

THEY ARE

SPECIALLY DEDICATED.

Our Father

which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, for ever.

AMEN.

CONTENTS.

I.

THE MODEL PRAYER.

What is proposed in this Course of Lectures. — Unbelief in Prayer. — The Christian Doctrine. — Lamentable Ignorance of it. — Confirmations of Reason and Experience. — Bishop Taylor. — Tennyson. — Henry Ward Beecher. — Analysis. — Origin and Design of the Lord's Prayer. — Why there is no Reference to our Lord himself in it, or to his Merit. — Ecclesiastical History. — Justin Martyr. — Tertullian. — The Unwritten History of this Prayer. — Its General Acceptance. — Prof. Müller. — Pope Pius. — Coquerel. — Maurice. — Its Influence on the Character of Washington. — Literature. — Booth the Actor. — "Bleak House." — Its Testimony to the Truth of the Bible and the Divinity of Christianity. — Its General Use. — Its Marvellous Depth, Breadth, and Capabilities. — Worthy of Fresh Study from the Stand-point of To-day 15

II.

THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD.

Madame De Staël. — Mission of Christ. — Analysis. — Rev. Dr. Williams. — What in God constitutes Fatherhood? — Parentship. — The Development Theory. — Dr. Young. — The King of Prussia. — Providential Provision. — Love. — Poetry. — Human and Divine Fatherhood compared. — The Jew, the Priest, and the Christian. — Truths involved. — What constitutes Sonship in Us? — The Vital Point. — Relation and Character. — Shakspeare. — A Lamentable Fact. — A Glorious Truth. — Regeneration a Spiritual Necessity. — The Experience of a Troy Officer in our

late War. — Results of Christian Truth and Grace. — Testimony of Paul. — Leighton. — Privileges of Childhood. — Witness of the Spirit. — Freedom of Access. — Special Promises. — Protection. — Corregio. — Special Duties arising out of Fatherhood in Him and Childhood in us. — "Dear Children." — The Father's House. — The Final Gathering at Home. — Caiaphas. — Transcendent Prospect. — Poetry 43

III.

HIS NAME.

Prof. Müller on Names. — Bible Use. — Exposition. — Socrates. — Plato. — Demosthenes. — Howard. — Garibaldi. — Exponents of Position. — Shakspeare. — Wordsworth. — A Blasted Name. — Outgush of Childhood. — The Prayer. — Dr. Barrow. — The Propriety of this Petition. — The Relationship. — Reason and Conscience. — Poetry. — Divine Requisition. — Influence of a Name. — Solomon. — God's regard for His Name. — Cardinal Buonaventure. — Our Welfare identified. — How His Name may be hallowed. — Influence of Words. — The Temple Chants. — Undue Familiarity. — Profanity. — Prevalence of this Vice. — Rev. Dr. Chapin. — Hebrews and Heathen. — Washington's Order-Book. — The Heart. — The Law. — Jeremy Taylor. — Cyprian. — Luther and the Reformation. — Robinson of Leyden. — Our Lives. — Wider Range of Influence. — How Earthly Parents are honored or dishonored. — Pathetic Exclamation. — Recapitulation. — Prayer. — Rare Old Hymn, by Thomas Cotterel . . 73

IV.

HIS KINGDOM.

What is a Kingdom? — Democracy. — The Three Kingdoms, — Material, Providential, Spiritual. — Rebellion. — Scriptural Use of "The Kingdom of God." — Elemental, Aggregate, Fruitional. — Leighton. — *Is God out of, or God "in Christ," King over the Soul-Realm?* — Prophecies. — Prerogatives of Royalty claimed by Christ. — The Crown of Thorns. — Royal Proclamation. — Laws of His Kingdom. — Philosophizing about Soul-Duty. — Rights of Subject. — Hyacinth. — Manning. — Claims of the Pope. — Huss the Martyr. — Basis of Christian Union. — Characteristics. — Lawful Authority. — Rectitude. — Omnipotence. — Love. — Permanency. — Glory. — *Nature* of this Petition. — Can We

pray It? — *Dare* we? — *Extent* of this Prayer. — The Missionary Spirit. — *The Time* of the Coming. — Reasons why it should come immediately. — Exhortation. — The Decree. — Opposition Futile. — Direction. — Nothing Lost. — Poetry. — Words of Encouragement. — Progress. — Maxwell. — Blood of Martyrs. — Napoleon at Helena. — Wonderful Testimony. — The Crucified to be Universal Conqueror. — 1683 95

V.

HIS WILL.

Unity of this Prayer. — Logical Relation. — Vast Importance of this Subject. — What is the "Will" of any Being? — Law. — Meaning of "Testament." — Speculations concerning the Basis of Moral Obligation. — Newton. — Dr. Adam Clarke. — The Apostle John. — The Assumption of this Petition. — Fallacies. — True Theory. — Rebellion in the Soul-Realm. — Old Theologians. — Prophecy. — Testimony of New Testament. — Fatalism. — Testimony of Facts. — Philosophy of Religious Experience. — Why offer this Prayer? — Necessity of Divine Aid. — The Grace of Obedience. — Promises. — Augustine. — Sabbath-school Fact. — Baxter. — Archbishop Usher. — How Angels do His Will. — Our loved Ones in Heaven. — True Aim. — Submission to His Will. — Gethsemane. — Example. — Our Gethsemanes. — Whom He loveth He chasteneth. — Augustine's Mother. — Shakspeare. — Invasion of Rome by the Huns. — The Best Soldier. — The Old Prophet. — Poetry. — The Inevitable Future. — The Happiest Man in the World. — Whittier's Hymn 123

VI.

DAILY FOOD.

The Strongest Evidences of the Divinity of Christianity found in the Lord's Prayer. — Beza. — The Syriac Version. — Analysis. — Assumption of Relation between God and our Daily Food. — Confirmations of Faith. — The *a priori* Argument. — The Miracle. — Argument from Fatherhood. — Mysticism. — Materialism. — Wonderfulness of the Human Body. — Bible View. — Nature and Extent of this Relation. — Paul at Athens. — Secondary Causes. — Essentialities beyond Human Power. — Bishop Heber. — Story of a Scotch Pastor. — Ability to use Means. — Divine Warnings concerning Human Proclivity. — Providential Blessings. — Es-

tablished Laws. — Industry. — "Bread of Violence." — Toil a Benefit to the Toiler. — Doubling the Gift. — Economy. — Lessons Taught. — Daily Recognition of God. — Rebuke. — Solomon. — Moderation of Desires. — Causes of Disease. — Prayer of Agur. — A Merchant's Experience. — Distrustfulness of Providence. — Inconsistency. — Extent of Promises. — Exhortation. — The Future Guaranteed 147

VII.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

The Spiritual Soul-Realm. — Its Superiority to the Physical. — Cyprian. — Spiritual Necessities. — Exegesis. — "Debts," "Trespasses," and "Sins." — Reasons for preferring the Word "Sins." — The Subject of this Petition. — Human Philosophies. — What is Sin? — A Condition and an Act. — Decision of the Supreme Court. — Universal Fact. — Truths about "Our Sins." — The two Propulsions. — The *Object* of this Petition. — Our Lord's Advice. — Courses which Men propose. — Heaven's Anthem. — Two Mysteries in the Divine Government. — Atonement Defined. — The Real Gospel. — *Pre-requisites* to the Acceptable Offering of this Petition. — Realization of Sin. — How a True Understanding of the Lord's Prayer is adapted to produce such Realizations. — Two Questions. — What to do if we have no Sense of Sin. — What to do if we have. — Precious Promises. — Their Certain Fulfilment. — Encouragement. — "Flee as a Bird to the Mountain." 175

VIII.

THE LIMIT OF OUR PLEA.

The General Law of Limitation. — Its only Exception. — Its Application to this Petition. — The Beneficent Justice of this Limitation. — Gospel Illustrations. — Poetry. — A Serious Difficulty. — Its Explanation. — Forgiving but not Forgetting. — Frederick the Great. — How God Forgives. — Shakspeare. — What disposes and enables us to do this. — German Infidels. — "The Grace of a Beaten Hound." Treating Others as they treat Us. — The two Antagonistic Spirits. — What it is to be a Christian. — Poetry. — A Colonel in our Army. — The Test. — Scripture Testimony. — Importance of this Christly Spirit. — Condition of our own Pardon. — Effect of Unforgiven Sin. — Poetry. — The Unforgiving

Unforgiven. — Enjoyment and Usefulness dependent. — The Heathen Philosopher. — Pliny. — Shakspeare. — An Unknown Writer. — Solomon. — Sir Matthew Hale. — Archbishop Cranmer. — Desales. — Dryden. — Subjective and Objective Power. — What broke a Wicked Soldier's Heart. — God's Ordination . 199

IX.

TEMPTATION.

Difference in Words as spoken by Different Persons. — The Fact which invests this Petition with Deepest Interest. — Exposition. — Double Meanings. — Adam. — Abraham. — Perplexing Difficulty. — Positions assumed. — *Direct* Relation of God to our Temptations. — Probation. — Bishop Butler. — Hezekiah. — Providential Arrangements for testing Character. — Aaron Burr. — Primitive Fathers. — The Two-fold Design. — A Charleston Banker. — Dr. Chapin. — Job. — David. — *Indirect* Relations of God to our Temptations. — Hebraistic Mode of Speaking. — Moral Necessity. — Elements within Us. — Process of Temptation. — St. Bernard. — Alchemy of Depravity. — Dangers without. — Power of the Devil. — Social, Business, and Political. — Startling Facts. — What shall be done? — A Little Child. — Poetry. — Realization of Danger. — Pray this as never before. — Encouragements. — The Great Exemplar. — Promises. — Keeping out of the Way of Temptation. — Best Society to be Sought. — Warnings from Experience and the Bible 228

X.

DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL.

Epitome of Christian Experience in the Lord's Prayer. — Evidence of Forgiveness. — Augustine. — What is Evil? — A Condition and an Experience. — Relation between Sin and Misery. — Importance of this Petition. — World full of Evils, but only One Essential Root. — Dr. Barrow's Exhaustive Statement. — Unbelief of Men. — The "Ruined Man." — Commercial Nomenclature. — Deduction of Reason. — Testimony of God. — Poetry. — Inability for Self-deliverance. — Struggles of Humanity. — Cæsar. — Byron. — Rev. Dr. Williams. — Experiences of the Best of Men. — Encouragements. — That He taught us thus to pray who cannot err. — His Sympathy. — Quotation from Dr. Wil-

liams. — Divine Ability to Deliver. — The Title given God Seventy Times in the Bible. — The Columbia River as described by the United-States Expedition Party. — The Help that never failed. — Poetry. — So Many have been Delivered. — Their Testimonies to the Efficiency of Grace. — The Lion of the Tribe of Judah. — Promises 249

XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Ascending and descending a Mountain. — Is this a Portion of the Original Prayer? — Omissions in Manuscripts. — Reasons for receiving this. — Syriac Versions. — Greek Liturgies. — Calvin. — Causal Preposition. — God has always permitted Arguments in Prayer. — Elijah. — Jehoshaphat. — Job. — Leighton's Fine Figure. — Unity and Logical Force of the Argument. — Analysis. — Points in the Argument. — God's Sovereignty. — The Roman's Boast. — The Ecumenical Council. — Fulfilment of Prophecy. — Danger from Democracy. — Divine Almightiness. — Deification of Nature. — Argumentative Power. — Alexander the Great. — The Logical Culmination. — Divine Glorification the Ultimate. — The Conqueror's Reply. — The Crowning Chapter. — The Closing. — "Amen." — Martin Luther. — Concluding Words. — Depths Unreached. — Need of Gracious Aid. — Address to Prayerless People. — The Judgment. — Sorrow against the Day of Sorrow. — The Prodigal. — Final Words to those who do pray 275

I.

THE MODEL PRAYER.

"After this manner, therefore, pray ye."

MATT. vi. 9.

LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

THE MODEL PRAYER.

"Our God is a Spirit; and they who aright
Would perform the pure worship He loveth,
In the heart's holy temple will seek with delight
That Spirit the Father approveth.

BERNARD BARTON.

TRAVELLERS who are about to examine a renowned edifice, rare in its architecture, venerable from its antiquity, and rich in its associations, before entering its portals are wont to take views of its external features.

So let us, who propose to study the sacred structure of "The Lord's Prayer," before passing within its hallowed precincts, occupy ourselves, for the present, with considerations more or less external to it, and preparatory to our future examination of its contents.

I. The object before us is a *Prayer*, only a Prayer, and one with which we have been *familiar since our childhood.*

Are there those who say, "We do not believe in prayer at all: we hold that all things are controlled by unchangeable laws; that Deity himself is immutable, and that therefore all prayer is useless"?

I will not stop to notice the bitterness of the reflection which such utterances cast upon the character of our Lord Jesus Christ, who set us the example, and taught us the duty, privilege, and manner, of prayer; but content myself, in this connection, with merely stating what the *Christian doctrine concerning this subject is.* The general ignorance in regard to it is lamentable. Most of those who reject this doctrine do not know what it is; at least, such is the result of my observations.

Chiefly because science teaches that all events are linked to adequate causes, and that the relation between such causes and effects is unchangeable, therefore these objectors conclude that there is no place left for prayer in the economy of human life.

But what will such say when told that the Christian doctrine is, that in the spiritual world it is an immutable law, enacted by the immutable God, that *he will hear and answer acceptable prayer;* that he has established just such an unchangeable relation between praying and receiving as we find between sowing and reaping in nature, or between effort and success in business; that between prayer as a cause, and its answer as an effect, exists the same connection as is found obtaining between causes and effects elsewhere in the world?

Whatever may be said in reply to this statement of our belief, it seems just to insist, that the objections referred to do not hold against the true Christian theory of prayer, but are based upon ignorance of it, and are, consequently, as unreasonable in our day as were the gibes of Voltaire, the sneers of Gibbon, or the sophistries of Hume, in a former period.

Moreover, the Christian theory of prayer is confirmed by *human experience.* One of the profoundest thinkers in America has said, "The best answer to all objections against prayer is found in the fact, that, in certain circumstances,

man in all ages, in all relations, in all degrees of civilization, *has prayed;* that in circumstances of need he *cannot help* praying: his nature spontaneously cries out for God."

With this basis in revelation and experience, nothing can be more rational, appropriate, or beautiful than prayer.

Why, what is this exercise? It is the act of a creature bowing before the Creator; the finite supplicating the Infinite; the subject doing homage to his King; the child addressing his Father!

What is it? It is the uplift of thought, the plea of the heart, the outgo of desire, the cry of need, the aspiration of hope.

It is dependence bowing before sovereignty; ignorance seeking knowledge from wisdom; weakness imploring strength from omnipotence; gratitude acknowledging mercies from supreme beneficence; sorrow pouring its griefs into the ear of infinite compassion; conscious guilt asking pardon from boundless mercy.

Bishop Taylor beautifully remarks, "Prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But, as the clouds drop the early

dew and the evening dew upon the grass, yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew unless some great shower, at certain seasons, did supply the rest: so the customary devotion of prayer, twice a day, is the falling of the early and the latter dew; but, if you will increase and flourish in works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall in a full shower of prayer."

Friend, whatever you may think, I tell you that it is one of the sublimest facts of the spiritual world, that God is the "hearer of prayer;" that, to millions of the most intelligent of earth, prayer is the vital breath of their spiritual natures; that its efficacy is to them a matter of personal consciousness.

'True piety has found friends in the friends of science; and true prayer has gone up from lips wet with Castalian dew." Say what men may, think what they will, the world's thinking associates *prayerfulness with goodness.* No one understood this better than the wicked Charles II., who planned that the Englishmen who visited him on the Continent should overhear

him praying in his closet: they were thus deceived into forming a wrong estimate of his true character.

The most intelligently devout of all lands say, with Tennyson, —

> "More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of. . . . .
> For what are men better than sheep or goats,
> That nourish a blind life within the brain,
> If, knowing God, they lift not holy hands in prayer,
> Both for themselves and those they call their friends?
> For so the whole round earth, in every way, is
> Bound by golden chains around the feet of God."

But do any say, "We are entirely familiar with 'The Lord's Prayer:' we have repeated it hundreds of times; and it therefore seems incredible that we should be much interested in it now"?

Do any ask, "Why did not the preacher select some more popular, more sensational subject for a course of lectures?"

To this I reply, that the preacher has preached too long, and had too much experience, to care much for merely sensational effects; that his

view of the pulpit is, that it has higher ministries than to cater to a desire for them. As to your familiarity with this prayer, all I care to say just here is, that, if you patiently accompany me through its exposition, I hope to show you that it has higher heights, deeper depths, broader and more comprehensive ranges of truth, than you have dreamed of. You are all familiar with flowers, trees, leaves, stones, rocks, water, clouds, sky, and stars; and yet science can show you, in the smallest as really as in the greatest of these, wonders of wisdom, power, and goodness which will amaze you. Henry Ward Beecher has said, "I used to think the Lord's Prayer a short prayer; but, as I live longer and see more of life, I begin to believe that there is no such thing as getting through it. If a man, in praying it, were to stop at every word until he had thoroughly comprehended and prayed it, his lifetime would be consumed. '*Our Father:*' there would be a wall one hundred feet high in just these two words to most men. '*Thy will be done:*' you say to yourself, 'Oh! I can pray that;' and all the time your mind goes round and round in im-

mense circuits and far-off distances; but God is continually bringing the circuits nearer to you, till he says, 'How is it about your temper and your pride? How is it about your business and daily life?' This is a revolutionary petition. It would make many a man's shop and store tumble to the ground to utter it. Who can stand at the avenue along which all his pleasant thoughts and wishes are blossoming like flowers, and send those terrible words, 'Thy will be done,' crashing through it? I think it is the most fearful prayer to pray in the world."

Look for a moment at its grand proportions, and you will see a justification of Mr. Beecher's words.

First, we have our attention directed to the *Being* to whom prayer should be addressed, — to *God*, in the glory of universal fatherhood. Thus our Lord in a single utterance demolishes Atheism, which says there is no God; and Pantheism, which denies his personality; and Positivism, which at best ignores his existence; and Epicurism, which teaches that God has no care for his creatures; and Polytheism, which affirms that there are many gods.

Next, we have *three facts* in relation to Him brought before us, —

His name,

His kingdom, and

His will.

Then, we have *three truths* descriptive of our own state, —

Our physical necessities,

Our spiritual needs arising out of our sins, and

Our dangers.

Finally, we have presented the sublime argumentative ascription which ought to go up from all souls to God.

It has been well said that "this prayer embodies a *catholic* spirit, developed in 'Our Father;' a *reverential* spirit, in 'Hallowed be thy name;' a *missionary* spirit, in 'Thy kingdom come;' an *obedient* spirit, in 'Thy will be done;' a *dependent* spirit in 'Give us, this day, our daily bread;' a *penitent* and *forgiving* spirit, in 'Forgive as we forgive;' a *cautious* spirit, in 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil;' an *adoring* spirit, in its sublime ascription, 'Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.'"

II. *The Origin and Design of the Lord's Prayer.* — Strictly speaking, this is not *his* prayer; for he never prayed it, and indeed could not do so, because he was sinless. The prayer which he offered as his own is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel. *That* he alone could offer. It is emphatically *his*. *This* is his only in the sense of being originated by him, as part of his spiritual instruction to us. As such, it is inestimably precious; for while prayer is an instinctive exercise of our moral natures, as well as the subject of a divine command, humanity has always felt it to be one of the most difficult as well as one of the most solemn services it ever tries to perform. Mankind have felt the need of guidance and instruction in order to pray aright; for we may pray wrongly, just as we may do any thing else wrongly. And herein is found the reason for the common failures in praying: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss."

Accordingly, before the advent, numerous forms of prayer were in use among the Jews. Indeed, it came to pass that every great reli-

gious teacher drew up prayer-forms for his followers. Hence we read, "that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

In compliance with this request, our divine Teacher pointed out what must be avoided in acceptable prayer. He specifically warns his disciples against the publicity, ostentation, repetition, and "much speaking," which were so prevalent in the prayers of Pharisees and Scribes; and then added, "After this manner pray ye."

It has been affirmed that this formula given by our Lord was MERELY *selected from existing forms of Jewish prayer*. Such is not the truth. De Wette has well observed, that "it derogates in no way from the Lord's Prayer that it embodies and expresses devotional ideas which had been breathed into pious souls by the Holy Ghost, and used by them in prayer." Indeed, under the circumstances, this is just what we would expect. The fact is, that our Lord demonstrates the identity of true piety in all ages by gathering up and unifying the inspired petitions of the saints of the Old Testament,

and casting them in the mould of his own divine mind, stamping them with the impress of his own originality, as the model of prayer for the saints of the New Testament. Therefore it is that we can trace the former use of each of these petitions singly, or of their distinct ideas, — doctrines which are here embodied into one sublime whole.

It may interest you to hear the direct proof of this. "Our Father who art in heaven:" in Isa. lxiv. 8 we read, "O Lord! thou art our Father;" in Eccles. v. 2, "God is in heaven." "Hallowed be thy name:" Psa. xlviii. 10, "According to thy name, O God! so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth." "Thy kingdom come:" Psa. xxii. 28, "For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations." "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven:" Psa. xl. 8, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!" Psa. ciii. 20, "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." "Give us, this day, our daily bread:" Prov. xxx. 8, "Feed me with food convenient for me." "And forgive our sins:"

Exod. xxxiv. 9, "Pardon our iniquity and our sin." "As we forgive those who sin against us:" Lev. xix. 18, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "And lead us not into temptation:" Gen. xxii. 1, "And it came to pass that God did tempt Abraham." "But deliver us from evil:" Psa. l. 15, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." 1 Chron. xxix. 11, "Thine, O Lord! is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord! and thou art exalted as head above all."

We thus find the identical ideas, which are scattered disconnectedly through these and hundreds of similar passages, gathered up, and incorporated into this one brief, yet all-comprehensive prayer. To the accomplishment of such a project, none but Immanuel was adequate. Just as in the production of a perfect plant or tree, God does not create new elements,

but only combines those already existing, and produced by himself, so our Lord constructed the model prayer out of divinely originated doctrine, already familiar to his people, because they were all that were needed to that end.

WHAT WAS OUR LORD'S DESIGN?

Did he purpose to initiate the use of set, invariable forms of prayer? Was this "the first instalment of a liturgy"? Did he design to prepare the way for that custom, which so largely prevails, of never offering any but written prayers? Did he even intend that this prayer should be perpetually used?

Instead of answering these questions directly myself, I prefer to present some facts, and leave you to answer them yourselves.

1. On another occasion, recorded in the eleventh chapter of Luke's Gospel, our Lord is reported, by that evangelist, as giving the *same* prayer in *substance*, *with important changes* and *omissions*, which I shall notice at greater length hereafter.

Does not this imply that he designed this to be "a model rather than a mould"?

2. In neither of the Gospels is there a record of this prayer having been used *on a single occasion* by any one of the disciples.

3. On other occasions, he gave additional instructions as *to the matter of prayer*. In nothing was he more explicit than in teaching that it must be offered *in his name*.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." "Hitherto, ye have asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

Now, in the prayer before us, there is no allusion to his name at all; and this fact, taken in connection with the above specific instructions, proves to my mind that he designed in it merely to give an illustration of the *manner* of *acceptable prayer*.

4. In neither the Acts nor Epistles of the New Testament is there the record of the use of this precise form, or even of any allusion to it, or other forms. The learned Dr. Alford, himself devoted to a liturgy, says, "It is very improbable that the Lord's Prayer was regarded

in the very early ages as a set form, delivered for liturgical purposes by our Lord."

5. It is affirmed, by those who have made the most thorough researches into ecclesiastical history, that such an expression as "reading prayers" is not found in the records of the first four centuries of the Christian era, and that the posture of primitive Christians would seem to make it an impossibility; for "They stood with arms crossed on their breasts, their heads back, and their eyes often closed." Dr. Spring says, "The most eminent ritualist the Church of England has produced for an hundred years confesses that the public services of the primitive church were all performed *extempore*, or *memoriter*, and that no one office was reduced to writing until the fourth century."

Justin Martyr, in describing the worship of the second century, says, that "The officiating minister offered up prayer and thanksgiving *according to his ability*. In the same century, Tertullian says, "We pray without a monitor, because we pray from the heart."

With these facts before us, I submit to you that our adorable Lord's design is obvious. He

would illustrate the difference between the *manner* of spiritual prayer and the cold formalities which were so popular. *They* were obtruded on public attention: such must not be the method of true prayer. Jews generally prayed with their faces towards the temple; while it was a common thing for Pharisees to arrange it so that their fixed times for prayer would find them on the corners of streets or other public places, where they "might be seen of men," during their devotions. *They* were ostentatious; the *true prayer* must be humble, reverential, and devout. *They* were vainly repetitious; *this* must be comprehensive, but sententious. *They* were long, employing "much speaking;" *this* must be brief and reverent. Thus our Lord warns against the two great evils in prayer, — the "vain ostentation of hypocrites," and "the vain repetition of the heathen."

Behold, then, the Christ-model, "after" which our prayers should be formed; the "manner after" which we ought always to pray.

III. *Meditate upon the unwritten history of this prayer.* Eighteen hundred years have passed away since, on a hillside in Palestine, it fell

from the lips of Him "who spake as never man spake;" and, during all these centuries, it has been a mighty power among men. No other portion of the Bible has obtained such general acceptance as this. Other portions have been assailed by fierce criticisms, and have given rise to bitter controversies; insomuch that it has been said, that the Bible is like the plains of Europe, —it has had a battle upon almost every chapter. But so slight has been the criticism on this; so general has been its acceptance by all sects, all churches, orthodox or heterodox; so impressed has the world been with its sublimity, beauty, breadth, and appropriateness to souls everywhere, —that, amid all ecclesiastical storms, wranglings, and oppositions, it, with unchallenged sacredness, has moved down the ages, like a sacred psalm, breathing blessings upon the generations, and constituting a point of almost universal harmony and unity. In fact, time, change, progress, development, only discover new richness and fresh adaptability to human needs in this inspired petition.

Prof. Müller, in his "Science of Language," says, "The Lord's Prayer was published in 1548

in fourteen different languages by Bibliander; in 1591, in twenty-six languages by Roccha; in 1592, in forty languages by Megiserus; in 1593, in fifty languages, by the same author.

Pope Pius IX. lately made a distinguished marquis of England a present of a copy of this prayer, printed in two hundred and fifty different languages and dialects.

It has attracted the attention of both statesmanship and scholarship throughout modern Europe and America. Dr. Williams says, "Coquerel, an eloquent Protestant preacher of Paris, a member of the Constituent Assembly which framed the last political constitution of that country, published, not long since, his discourses on 'The Lord's Prayer,' with an evident bearing, throughout his remarks, upon the theories of social reform which have been so eagerly and boldly presented by some of the thinkers of his nation."

In England, numerous are the writings published upon this subject; among the older of which are those of Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, and Leighton.

Among the later is a volume by Rev. F. D.

Maurice, professor in King's College, London, and lecturer at Lincoln's Inn, — a position which brings him in connection with the bar and bench, where are found some of the mightiest intellects of the realm.

In Paulding's "Life of Washington," we are informed that his noble mother daily read to her household the "Contemplations of Sir Matthew Hale." That book has a long and interesting series of meditations upon the Lord's Prayer; and it has well been said, that how much of the sobriety, balanced judgment, calm dignity, and stern religious virtue, which shone so serenely amidst the fierce conflicts of the Revolution from the character of our great chieftain, were due to the influences of those sweet, sacred reflections, only the revelations of the final day can disclose.

Could the full history of mankind be truly written, it is believed that all would be amazed at "how much of earth's freedom and order and peace would be found to have distilled through quiet and secret channels from the full and exhaustless fountains of this single prayer. It has hampered the wickedness which it

did not altogether curb; and it has nourished individual goodness and greatness in the eminence of which nations and ages have rejoiced."

Of its intrinsic power to arrest general attention, and move the universal heart, we are poor judges, simply because of our familiarity with it, and our ignorance of its capabilities. In illustration of this, I give you the following incident, whose truth is vouched for by one of the leading journals of our country.

In the palmy days of the great Booth, before his genius had been marred by dissipation, he was invited by a pious old gentleman in Baltimore to dine. The host, though disapproving of theatre-going, had heard so much of Booth's wonderful powers, that curiosity overcame his prejudices; and his invitation was cordially given and accepted. After dinner, lamps were lighted, the company seated in the drawing-room, and Booth was requested as a special favor to repeat the Lord's Prayer. Slowly and reverently he arose, and became pale, while tears gushed to his upturned eyes. The silence was profound, almost painful; until at last the spell was broken, as if by an electric shock, as

his rich-toned voice, from white lips, syllabled forth "Our Father which art in heaven," &c., with a pathos and fervid solemnity that thrilled all hearts. He finished. The silence continued. Not a voice was heard from the rapt audience, until from the corner of the room a subdued sob broke the silence; and the old gentleman tottered forward with streaming eyes, and, seizing Booth by the hand, in tremulous accents exclaimed, "Sir, you have afforded me a pleasure for which my whole future life will be grateful. I am an old man, and have repeated that prayer every day since my boyhood; but *I never heard it before, — never.*" "You are right," responded Booth: "to read that prayer as it should be read has cost me the severest study and labor for forty years; and I am far from being satisfied with my rendering of that wonderful production. Hardly one in ten thousand comprehends how much beauty, tenderness, and grandeur can be condensed in a space so small, and in words so simple. *That prayer of itself illustrates the truth of the Bible, and stamps upon it the seal of divinity.*"

Perhaps the most pathetic passage in the voluminous writings of Dickens occurs in "Bleak House," where he describes the death of poor, neglected "Jo." The dying boy exclaims to his companion, "'It's turned wery dark, sir! Is there any light a-comin'?'

"'It is coming fast, Jo.'

"'Jo, my poor fellow!'

"'I hear you, sir, in the dark; but I'm a-gropin', a-gropin': let me catch hold of your hand.'

"'Jo, can you say what I say?'

"'I'll say anythink as you say, sir; for I knows it's good.'

"'*Our Father*,'—

"'Our Father: yes, that's wery good, sir.'

"'*Which art in heaven*,'—

"'Art in heaven. Is the light a-comin', sir?'

"'It is close at hand. *Hallowed be thy name.*'

"'Hallowed—be—thy'—

"The light is come upon the dark, benighted way. Dead!"

Oh, what a history this immortal utterance

has had! It has been uttered by the budding lips of thousands of children in every age; and it is breathed from thousands of households every day.

O man, my brother! you may not pray at all now. Years and years may have passed since you bowed knee or soul before your God. Perhaps you sneer at prayer now; perhaps your lips are soiled by profanity now: but you can never, never forget, how, when you were a pure, innocent little boy, you knelt beside your mother's knee, and when, with her soft hand on your head, she taught you to say, "Our Father which art in heaven."

This prayer has been offered by stalwart manhood, fair womanhood, and decrepit age. It has gone up to God from beneath the crown and the helmet, as well as the mitre. It has ascended from palaces and dungeons, as well as the home of poverty and the churches of Christ. It has been prayed in almost every clime, — from mountain-tops and from valleys, jungles and deserts, villages and cities, and from many, many points on seas and heaving oceans. From amid the perpetual ices of the

north and the sweltering heats of the south, from the bamboo huts of the Orient and the log-cabins of the Occident, it has been wafted to heaven; and in all the future of time, through the progress of the world and all the developments of humanity, it will hold its divinely-appointed place, and be the Christ-model of acceptable prayer, immutable in its unity, inexhaustible in its variety, and universal in its adaptability.

Such, friends, is the subject to which I shall ask your protracted attention. Could one have been selected embodying more of intelligent religious interest, or permanent profit? Familiar as you may be with it, perhaps you have never made a study of it; but I submit to you, that its intrinsic merit makes it eminently worthy of studious attention, and that it is due its divine Author and ourselves that we patiently investigate it from the luminous stand-point of to-day.

II.

HIS FATHERHOOD.

"Our Father which art in Heaven."

MATT. vi. 9.

THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD.

"O Father-Eye, that hath so truly watched,
O Father-Hand, that hath so gently led,
O Father-Heart, that by my prayer is touched;
That loved me first, when I was cold and dead!
Still do thou lead me on, with faithful care,
The narrow path to heaven, where I would go,
And train me for the life that waits me there,
Alike through love and loss, through weal and woe."

MADAME DE STAEL, one of the most eminent of French women, has been quoted as saying, that "if the Founder of Christianity had done no more than to teach the human race to bow before one God, and all pray, 'Our Father who art in heaven,' he would have conferred an inestimable boon, and given proof of the divinity of his religion."

It would be difficult to compress more truth in the same space than is here embodied. Such was the sublime ideal of our Lord Jesus Christ. He saw humanity disintegrated on

earth, and alienated from heaven. He saw in the darkened human mind false conceptions of God; and, in the human heart, selfish isolation from its own kindred. Combining in himself both the divine and the human, profoundly in sympathy, therefore, with God and with man, he came to re-unite men with each other and with their common Father.

As one means of securing this end, he taught them to pray, "Our Father," &c.; and the divine adaptation of this means to that end will impress us more and more as we study this sacred composition.

Analyze with me the opening sentence, which alone is before us now.

Observe the *title* we are here taught to ascribe to God. It is not Creator, Preserver, Governor, but "Father." How touchingly, tenderly, expressively beautiful! This, I think, is the sweetest name, after "mother," in our language. It takes years of growth and of experience to enable us to comprehend, in any good degree, what "Father" means.

Thus we have, at the beginning, the *fatherhood* of God recognized.

Next observe that we are taught to pray, not *my*, but "*our* Father." Here our selfishness receives its first rebuke. Thus our Lord teaches us to acknowledge *the brotherhood of humanity*, and, when we pray, to place ourselves in vital relation to it and say, "*Our Father.*"

An old divine has said, "These two words comprehend the law and the prophets, inasmuch as this recognition of fatherhood in God implies *love* towards him; and this recognition of brotherhood implies love to our neighbor as ourselves."

Finally, we have the *character and special residence* of our Father revealed.

"In heaven" implies both of these ideas. It reveals him as subject to none of the limitations and frailties which are necessarily associated with the best types of earthly fatherhood, — as "heavenly" in his nature and character.

Moreover, with the idea of a father is connected the idea of a home; and this phrase reveals to us that his abode is not amid the mutabilities of this changing world, but amid the eternal immutabilities of heaven. And surely the Father's home ought to be the object of chief interest and desire to his children.

By this analysis, then, you see

Divine Fatherhood recognized,

Human Brotherhood acknowledged, and

The Character and Home of the Father revealed.

Rev. William R. Williams, D.D., in commenting on these words, remarks, "They may be regarded as grouping together the three principles which settle man's just relation to this world and the next, — the *filial*, the *fraternal*, and the *celestial;* for, though we are now *of* the earth, we were not originally *from* it, nor are we to be forever *upon* it. We are of heaven, and for heaven; for there, and not here, our Father is; and, where he is, our true home is."

By this method, you readily perceive that we have discovered by far too much truth for one lecture. I am therefore compelled to pass by all else, and speak to you only of *the fatherhood of God, and some of the truths which it involves.*

I. *What in him constitutes his fatherhood?* With every distinct divine title, distinct truths are associated. What are associated with this?

1. *He is* our *Parent*, — the *Originator of our existence*. He is "our Father," because "we are his offspring," — a fact which is affirmed of no other existences. Of us alone it is said with respect to God, that "he is the Former of our bodies, and the Father of our spirits."

While mere creation does not necessarily involve fatherhood, still, of humanity, and of humanity alone, the Triune God said, "Let us make man in our image;" and "in the image of God created he him."

All other inanimate and animate forms were created after ideals in the divine mind; but man was made in God's own likeness. Humanity came direct from Divinity, trace its origin back as far as you please.

Human life is not, therefore, as some scientists of our day would make out, a mere development from lower phases of animate existence, but a direct creation, bearing the image of the Creator; with a body erect, whose brow faces the sun; and with a soul endowed, in a finite degree, with the very powers possessed by the divine Parent in an infinite degree.

Verily, as to original endowment, every soul is divinity in miniature.

Hence the poet sang, —

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
How passing wonder He who made him such;
Who centred in our make such strange extremes!
From different natures marvellously mixed!
Connection exquisite of distant worlds!
Distinguished link in Being's endless chain!
Midway from nothing to the Deity!
A beam ethereal, sullied, and absorbed!
Though sullied and dishonored, still divine!
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!
A worm! a god!"

This transcendent fact invests our humanity with imperishable interest. It encircles it with a glory that gathers not around a material world. Verily, whatever the color of his skin, whatever the nature of his circumstances, whatever the degree of his culture, whatever his moral character, every human being may look upon all other human beings, and say,

"Have we not all *one* Father?" Deny it who may, ignore it who may, the tremendous fact remains, that, as to origin and endowment, every man was "*made in* the *similitude* of God," and is a child of the All-Father.

The story is told of the King of Prussia, who, welcomed by the school-children, asked, "To what kingdom does this orange belong?" — "Vegetable." — "To what does this gold coin belong?" — "Mineral." — "To what kingdom do I belong?" The child waited a moment, and replied, "To God's kingdom, sir; because God created man in his own image." The answer touched the king's heart.

This corresponds with the universal confession recorded by Isaiah: "We are all unclean; we do all fade as a leaf: but still, O Lord! *thou art our Father.* We are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thine hand."

2. With this title are associated ideas of *provision for* and *protection over offspring.*

A parent who should withhold these, you would all say, was no *father.*

"In Him we live and move, and have our being." *He* built this world for our temporary

dwelling-place. He fitted it up in order to administer to our necessities and enjoyment. All things above, beneath, around, were made for us. Hence each may sing, —

"For me kind Nature opes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower:
Annual for me the grape and rose renew
The juice nectareous and the balmy dew:
For me health gushes from a thousand springs:
For me the mine ten thousand treasures brings:
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise, —
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies."

And all this is merely the materialized thought of our Father's care for his children. It is his power acting upon dead matter, through laws of his own enacting, that "covereth the heavens with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth:" "maketh grass to grow for the cattle, and herbs for the service of man, and bringeth food out of the earth:" causeth "his sun to shine upon the evil and the good," thus demonstrating, that "in his hands is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind," and justifying the title, given him

thousands of years ago by the man of Uz, when with gratitude he exclaimed, "O thou Preserver of man!"

How wonderful is his paternal providence over the world! What prodigious power it must take to uphold all things in such marvellous equipoise! What infinite wisdom it must require to maintain the precise proportions of the elements which constitute the air we breathe, and the water we drink, so as to keep them healthful, and preserve them from becoming deathful! What constant supervision it must demand, in order to produce, in every latitude, just what is needed by his children who live there! What a perpetual outflow of omnipotence must be requisite in order to keep the complicated and delicate machinery of the world from becoming disordered, from wearing out, or breaking down! Verily, in the richness of his providential provision for, and sheltering protection of, mankind, he is "our Father."

3. Finally, with this title is associated more than parentage or protection. It requires the idea of *tender love* and *yearning interest* in offspring to fill up our conception.

He who should merely provide for and extend protection to children might be a parent; but he would not be worthy of the sacred name of *father*.

Our heavenly Parent not only makes such ample providential provision for the necessities and comforts of his children, not only extends over them the broad protective shelter of his care, but he loves them, feels for them, with a depth of yearning solicitude which none but a God can feel. His works, his laws, his gospel, are the demonstration of the reality and tenderness of this. All the forms of pitying, sympathizing, appreciative affection found in the purest type of earthly fatherhood are developed in his character and dealings with us, in measures beyond our full comprehension.

These three ideas, then,

PARENTAGE,
PROTECTION, and
AFFECTION,

constitute fatherhood in God.

Pause now, and, combining these ideas, and applying them to the attributes of the divine nature, behold how resplendent fatherhood in

him is! Is he spiritual and eternal, omnipotent and omniscient, immutable and immaculate? Is he infinite in love, justice, and truth? O wondrous fact! then fatherhood impregnates, envelops, directs, and subordinates all these to its beneficent purposes.

Think of the best human father in the whole world, — the most loving, the kindest, wisest, wealthiest, and most powerful; and, precious, beautiful, noble as he is, what is he compared with our Father in heaven? Only what shadow is compared with substance, the temporal as compared with the eternal, the finite as compared with the infinite!

For myself, when I think of him merely as Creator, I am confused with ideas of omnipotence. When I think of him merely as providential Controller, I am overwhelmed with conceptions of wisdom and general beneficence. When I think of him merely as Law-giver, supreme Ruler, and Judge, I am inspired with awe; but when Christianity reveals to me his *fatherhood*, and teaches me that I and all my brothers and sisters, however poor, weak, and unworthy, may look up and pray, "Our Father which art in

heaven," then my whole being is subdued, melted, until it penitently bows and adores.

Krummacher relates the following fact, which is deeply interesting in this connection: —

"A Jew entered a Parsee temple, and beheld the sacred fire. He spake to the priest: 'How? ye adore fire?' — 'Not the fire,' answered the priest, 'it is the image of the sun, and its quickening light.' — 'Then,' asked the Jew, 'do ye worship the sun as your deity? Do ye not know that he is but the creature of the Almighty?' — 'We know that,' replied the priest; 'but sensitive man requires a sensible sign to comprehend the Highest: and is not the sun the image of the invisible and incomprehensible Fountain of Light, which sustains and blesses all things?' Then the Israelite answered: 'Do your people, then, discern between the image and the original? They call the sun their God, and descend from him lower still, kneeling before an earthly flame. You charm their outward, but blind their inward eye, and, whilst placing before them the earthly light, withdraw from

them the heavenly. Thou shalt make no image or likeness.'

"'How do you describe the Supreme Being?' asked the priest.

"The Jew answered, 'We call him Jehovah-Adonai; that is, the Lord, which is, which was, and which is to come.'

"'Your word is great and glorious,' said the Parsee; 'but it is terrible.'

"Just then a Christian joined them, and said, 'We call him Abba, Father.'

"Then the heathen and Jew looked at one another with wonder, and said, 'Your word is the highest and nearest. But who gave you courage to call the Eternal thus?'

"'Who else,' said the Christian, 'but he, the Father himself?' Upon this he declared to them the mystery of the manifestation of the Father in the Son, and the word of reconciliation; and, as they heard this, they believed: and, raising their eyes to heaven, they spake, full of fervor and devotion, 'Father, beloved Father!' And then they joined their hands, all three, and called themselves brethren."

II. *Truths involved in this doctrine.*

1. *Fatherhood in him involves childhood in us.* Most assuredly if he is "Our Father," we are his children. As we have seen what constitutes the former relationship, let us now inquire *what constitutes the latter.*

By virtue of the facts that we are his offspring, provided for by his providence, and are also the objects of his affection, a *natural* relationship is established; but I submit to you, that there may be — there often is — the mere *natural* relationship of offspring between man and God *without their possession of any of those moral qualities which go to make up the true character of children.* There are human fathers and mothers — God pity them! — whose hearts are full of bitter sorrow because their offspring neither exhibit nor possess any of the characteristics of true childhood. Mournfully they cry, "Our sons and daughters are no children to us." What do they mean? What did our adorable Lord mean, when he said of certain Jews, "Ye are of your father, the devil;" and when he said to his own disciples, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to

them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, *that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven*"? or, when it is said, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not; but unto as many as received him, unto them gave he power to *become the sons of God*, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God?"

I answer, by calling your attention to the fact, that *childhood stands for both a relation and a character*, just as we have seen that fatherhood does.

Let us now inquire what these elements are which constitute the character of children.

1. *Recognition of fatherhood.*

Is not this essential? Can you conceive of any one being worthy of the name of a child who voluntarily and habitually ignores his relation to his parent; and who, even when that parent is full of goodness, and is daily loading him with benefits, and manifesting the tenderest interest in his welfare? Still suppose, that persistently, in thought and action, he lives as if he had no parent, — suppose such an one should

thus not merely refuse to recognize the relation, and fail to develop gratitude in view of it, but in every way practically deny this relationship, — would you not all say, "*He is no child*"?

Nothing is more despicable than ingratitude. Hence Shakspeare makes King Lear exclaim, —

> "Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,
> More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,
> Than the sea-monster."

> "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child!"

Is not this precisely true of mankind? Do they not voluntarily, habitually, and persistently ignore fatherhood in God? Are there not multitudes who in their hearts say, "There is no God"? and multitudes more whose philosophies deny both his personality and all present relationship on his part toward us. and, who, of course, never thank him for any of his mercies? Of such, — and their name is Legion, — it is, alas! true that they are "without God in the world."

2. *Love of the Father* is another element of

childhood. All must admit this. Is he worthy of the name of child who neither feels nor exhibits any affection for the author of his being? But, suppose, that instead of possessing or exhibiting love for his good father, he should possess and exhibit hatred, opposition, antagonism toward him, — what then? You say that would be horrible; that would be not only unchildlike, but diabolical: yet this is precisely the case with our depraved humanity toward God. Is it not true, that, naturally, the "love of God is not in us;" but that we find within us a dislike of his holiness, — in our "carnal minds" enmity toward his spirituality, and in our obdurate hearts rebellion against his will, which have made us "aliens," even "enemies"?

3. *Submissive obedience* is the last of these elements I care to mention.

Who denies this? No one will maintain that willing obedience to the righteous will of a righteous father is not essential to the character of a child. Then, solemnly I ask, how have *we* acted, in this regard, toward *our* Father? Is it not consciously true, that mankind practically

deny his authority, and that human nature, in all the ages, has said with Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him"?

It is the testimony of every record of the past, that disobedience has characterized the whole history of our fallen race; that God's will has been resisted, his law violated, his love spurned, his invitations slighted, his threatenings disregarded.

Thus we see that as,

PARENTAGE,

PROTECTION, and

AFFECTION, *in God* constitute his *Fatherhood*, —

so

RECOGNITION,

LOVE, and

SUBMISSION in *us* are requisite to constitute spiritual childhood.

And so we reach *two important truths*, the one glorious, the other lamentable, viz., —

Fatherhood has remained perfect in him; but the character of childhood has departed from us.

Hence that infinitely pathetic exclamation of our God, "If I am a Father, where is mine

honor?" "Hear, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth! for I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me!"

From these considerations, two conclusions follow, —

First, oftentimes the Lord's prayer is offered by those who are *incapacitated* for more than a mere utterance of its words; for they are utterly destitute of the characteristics of spiritual childhood which are essential to its acceptable use; and therefore it must be to him as "sounding brass," or "tinkling cymbal," — it must be sheer, heartless, cruel mockery of his fatherhood.

Next, the pressing need of a spiritual change in the human soul becomes apparent.

Our divine Lord, we now see, did not utter an *arbitrary command*, but stated a *spiritual* necessity, when he said, "Ye must be born again;" for by these words he only indicated such a change as would free our natures from their alienship and rebellion against him, and restore to them that grateful recognition of love for, and submission to, "our Father," which

constitutes spiritual childhood. Oh, what an era that is in the history of a human soul, when it is quickened to a realization of this truth! — when it sees the necessity expressed by our Lord, who said, "Except ye be converted, and become *as little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven!"

In illustration of this, I give you a fact which transpired during the late war, in connection with members of our own congregation, the parties to which are our personal friends. An officer of the Troy regiment which was captured at Harper's Ferry, while on his way with the regiment, which had been parolled, from Baltimore to Chicago, wrote the following to his devoted Christian wife: "Oh the grandeur of the Alleghany Mountains! — the power of the Creator, as seen in their formation, and the still greater power displayed in the production of man, — a being capable of conceiving and executing the gigantic design of crossing these huge mountains by means of the subdued and controlled elements of fire and water! I found myself in tears before this display of the works of the Deity. Then I read in my Bible of the

wondrous works of the same God, and was again melted. But, oh! I have seen the Deity in his mysterious majesty in Nature; I have seen him presiding in gracious providence on the battle-field: but, alas! *I have not seen him as my Father*, — I have not felt toward him as *a child*. Oh for the simplicity of faith, the *character of a child!* God give it to me."

Friends, the workings of Christian truth and grace produce exactly this experience: it makes us children in character; its birth-cry is, "Father." So that, whilst creation attached us to God, and the fall detached us from him, regeneration re-unites us to him; and when the spirit of adoption within us cries, "Abba, Father," then, oh, then, with an emphasis, a meaning, a fulness, a tenderness, a lovingness, we never dreamed of before, we tremulously but joyously exclaim, "*Our Father which art in heaven!*"

See you not now what the apostle meant when he said, "Ye are children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus;" and when he said, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those who were under the

law, that we *might receive the adoption of sons;*" and what mystery of grace he unfolded, when, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he speaks of God's "having predestinated us *unto the adoption of children*, by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved"?

Thus you see how scripturally truthful this sentence of Leighton is: "The sonship that emboldens us to draw near unto God, as our Father, is derived from his only-begotten Son. He became the Son of man, to make us anew sons of God." Because of our connection with him, we cry, "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord! *art our* Father, our Redeemer; from everlasting is thy name."

Another truth involved in this doctrine *relates to the privileges* which are associated with fatherhood in God and childhood in us.

All that was lost by the loss of our spiritual character is restored; for, "where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." "The

Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and, if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." *Freedom of access to him* is ours at all times, and in all places.

> "We would no longer lie
> Like slaves beneath the throne:
> Our faith would 'Abba, Father,' cry,
> And then the kindred own."

Special promises are ours. "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands!" "Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

Is there one among you who will not join me in exclaiming, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God"? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet

appear what we shall be: but we know, that, when he shall appear, we shall be *like him;* for we shall see him as he is."

"Beneath his watchful eye,
His saints securely dwell:
That hand which bears all nature up
Shall guard his children well.

"Why should an anxious load
Press down your weary mind?
Haste to your heavenly Father's throne,
And sweet refreshment find."

Corregio stood before a grand painting, enraptured; and as he gazed, grasping the sublime conception, amazed at the wondrous execution and coloring of the picture, exclaimed, "Thank God! I, too, am a painter." So, when a Christian looks steadily at what it is to be children of our Father, with sublime thrills of joy he can say, "Thank God! I, too, am a child of the Lord God Almighty."

O children of God! let us *recognize*, *love*, *and obey* 'our Father' with our whole ransomed and renewed natures! Let us submissively bow to his will, submit to all his dealings; for "we

have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us; and we gave them reverence. *Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of our spirits, and live?* They, verily, for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." Among those who really are his children, there may and do exist different degrees of the child-spirit. Some are better "children," than others, — more constant in their recognition of dependence upon the fatherhood of God, more deep and fervent in their love, more implicit in their obedience. *What kind of children are we?*

Is our recognition of him dim and infrequent? Is our love faint and fickle? Is our obedience spasmodic and unwilling? In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul says, "Be ye therefore followers (imitators) of God, *as dear children*, and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor." *Who "dear children"* are, we all know. And, while a parent loves all his children, still, do not such excite in him peculiar affec-

tion; and are not such sources of peculiar joy? Let us not, then, beloved, rest satisfied with merely possessing the elemental character, but study, strive, and labor to become worthy of the title of "dear children" of our infinitely good Father.

Finally, project your thought into the future, as you remember *the purpose of "our Father" to gather all his children together in his own house of many mansions.* His "family" is one. Verily, —

> "One family we dwell in him,
> One church above, beneath;
> Though now divided by the stream,
> The narrow stream, of death.
>
> "One army of the living God,
> To his command we bow:
> Part of the host have crossed the flood,
> And part are crossing now.
>
> "Some to their everlasting home
> This solemn moment fly;
> And we are to the margin come,
> And soon expect to die."

The chief priests in council, devising means to resist the triumphant Messiah, heard deeper

truth than they dreamed of, when Caiaphas, the high priest, "prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, *but that he also should gather together in one the children of God which are scattered abroad.*" They are scattered abroad over the whole earth now; but he has been gathering them "together in one" heaven, — one Father's home, — during all the ages; and he has promised, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West. I will say to the North, give up; and to the South, keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, — *even every one* that is called by my name; for I created him for my glory. I have formed him; yea, I have made him."

Oh, transcendent purpose! Oh, glorious, ineffable prospect! Oh, gathering of gatherings! when the saints of all ages in harmony meet, when the children all get home, when all are safely sheltered in the house not made with hands, — "the building of God, eternal in the heavens," — where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying: neither shall

there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away, and they shall go no more out forever."

"My Father's house on high!
Home of my soul! how near
At times, to Faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy golden gates appear!

Ah! then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love, —
The bright inheritance of saints, —
Jerusalem above.

Yet clouds will intervene,
And all my prospect flies:
Like Noah's dove, I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.

Anon the clouds depart,
The winds and waters cease;
While sweetly o'er my gladdened heart
Expands the bow of peace.

I hear, at morn and even,
At noon and midnight hour,
The choral harmonies of heaven;
Earth's Babel-tongues o'erpower.

Then, then, I feel that he,
Remembered or forgot,
The Lord, is never far from me,
Though I perceive him not."

III.

HIS NAME.

"Hallowed be thy Name."

MATT. vi. 9.

HIS NAME.

"Him in whom they move and live,
Let every creature sing;
Glory to their Maker give,
And homage to their King.
Hallowed be his name beneath:
As in heaven, on earth adored.
Praise the Lord in every breath;
Let all things praise the Lord."

IN his work on the "Science of Language," Prof. Max Müller says, "Analyze any word you like, and you will find that it expresses a general idea, peculiar to the individual to which it belongs. What is the meaning of 'moon'? The measurer. Of 'sun'? The begetter of earth. The primitive idea of a 'name,'" he adds, "is preserved in our language, in the actual signification of the word. For *name*, and its kindred terms, — *nomen* in Latin, *o-nom-a* in Greek, and *nama* in Sanskrit, — are derived from a root, which is in fact the same as the

English word *to know*." "Name," therefore, means that by which any thing or being is *known*. You readily perceive the relation of this quotation to the theme before us, "The name of God." It denotes his attributes, is identical with his character, stands for himself, is that by which he is known.

All familiar with the Bible must remember how it everywhere hallows the name of the Deity. On Mount Sinai, "The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with Moses, and proclaimed the *name* of the Lord, — the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." The Psalmist prayed, "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the *name* of the God of Jacob defend thee." "For thy name's sake, O Lord! pardon my iniquity." "Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake." "We will remember the *name* of the Lord." "Save me, O God! by thy *name*, and judge me by thy strength." "I will wait on thy *name*." "The *name* of the Lord is a strong tower." "They that know thy *name* will put their trust in thee." In Isaiah we read, "Behold the *name* of the Lord

cometh from afar, burning with his anger." In Micah, fourth chapter, we read the remarkable words, "We will walk in the *name* of the Lord our God for ever and ever."

In our Lord's memorable prayer, he exclaimed, "I have manifested thy *name* to the men that thou gavest me out of the world." And when an apostle wrote, that God the Father had given to his dear Son "a *name* that is above every name," we understand him to affirm, that the Father recognized the divinity of the Son, and the propriety of paying divine honors to him.

With these scriptural references before us, we are prepared, I trust, to study the petition, "Hallowed be thy name."

I. Let us attend to its *exposition.*

"To hallow" means to make holy, to consecrate, to treat as sacred, to honor, and devoutly reverence. You perceive that this old Saxon term substantially means just what the more common word "sanctify" expresses. I think, however, that we are aided in getting at the radical signification of this word by a reference

to the Greek, of which it is a translation. Our Lord used the word "ἁγιασθήτω," which is compounded of "*a*" negative, and the Greek word for "*earth*." Thus we see that its radical meaning is, "not of earth,"—above the earth, exalted, magnified, hence religiously reverenced, held sacred, adored.

Therefore our petition saith, "*Hallowed* be thy name;" because, as we have seen, God's name stands for himself: it distinguishes him from all other beings and all imaginary gods. Moreover, a name often stands for character. "*Socrates* has almost no personality; but he signifies philosophic common sense. *Plato* means pure thought and imagination; *Demosthenes*, eloquence; *Cato*, stern integrity; *Nero*, cruelty; *Napoleon*, military genius; *Washington*, patriotism; *Howard*, philanthropy; *Garibaldi*, the friend of the common people." Thus we see that names epitomize histories and characters. Accordingly we speak of some who have great, and of others who have small; of some who have good, of others who have bad; of some who have honored, of others who have dishonored, names. Such titles indicate the positions men occupy in society, in their

business, literary, political, and religious relations; and so it comes to pass, that in no way can you harm a man more than by *injuring his name.*

Shakspeare truly says, —

> "Good name, in man or woman dear,
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls."

And Wordsworth as truly wrote, —

> "Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce
> Of that serene companion, *a good name,*
> Recovers not his loss; but walks with shame,
> With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse."

But what *specific name* or title is here referred to, which, as the exponent of so much, is to be "hallowed"?

In the opening phrase, a title had been applied to God which is intwined with the dearest associations of the human heart, — "our Father;" and, in the same sentence, he taught us to pray, "hallowed be thy name," — *that* name of the infinite God which bathes the whole array of his attributes in the mellowed glory, tender radiance, of fatherhood!

Thus expounded, you see in this petition the first outgush of a soul, which, by the spiritual experience of Christianity, has become a child of God in *character;* one who has received the spirit of adoption whereby he cries "Abba, Father;" one in whom recognition of, love for, and submission to the divine fatherhood have been produced; one out of the depths of whose nature, as spontaneously as perfume from a flower, or light from the sun, springs the adoring exclamation, "Hallowed be thy name!" Finally, there is in it also a prayer, that by all beings, in all places, and at all times, this precious name may be thus reverenced, honored, held sacred, adored, "hallowed."

Dr. Isaac Barrow thus developed the meaning of this petition, "By a rare complication, this sentence doth involve both praise and petition; doth express both our acknowledgment of what is, and our desire of what should be. We do, I say, hereby partly acknowledge and praise the super-eminent perfections of God above all things, in all kinds of excellency, joining in that seraphical doxology, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!' and we do

also declare our hearty wishes, that he may be everywhere had in the highest veneration; that all honor and praise, all duty and service, may, in a peculiar manner, be rendered to him by all beings; that all minds may entertain worthy opinions of him, — all tongues speak his praise, all creatures obey his will, adore his name, and worship him in sincerity, with zeal and fervency."

II. *The propriety of this petition.* The following considerations will, I trust, make this sufficiently apparent: —

1. *Natural justice dictates* that fatherhood should be honored, hallowed, by childhood.

Does it not? Think of this relationship. The father is the author of the very existence of the child: he supports, sustains, and protects it during all the years of infancy and youth. His love for and interest in his offspring is deep, tender, self-sacrificing, and perpetual. Ought not, therefore, the child to honor, reverence, hallow, that father's name? Verily, reason and conscience affirm that not to do so is unnatural, — a high crime against Nature.

If this be so with regard to the merely human

relationship, how much more ought it to hold true in regard to our relationship to God, of whose fatherhood we have seen that the highest earthly type is only a weak and imperfect shadow?

We all feel that Shakspeare may be pardoned for the seeming exaggeration, when he says, —

> "To you, your father should be as a god;
> One that composed your beauties: yea, and one
> To whom you are but a form in wax,
> By him imprinted, and within his power
> To leave the figure, or disfigure it."

Then, assuredly, he who *is God*, and is our Father, ought to receive the highest veneration of which we are capable: his name ought to be "hallowed" to the full degree of our capacity.

2. *He requires it.*

Nothing is more commendable in men and women, especially the young, than care for, watchfulness over, solicitude about, their names in the communities where they live; for, as we have seen, their names are the exponents of themselves, — the indices of their reputations. Thus understood, as their names are held, so are

they honored or dishonored, influential or uninfluential, sought or avoided. As are their names, so are their social, intellectual, financial, and moral positions, in general estimation. *A dishonored name* is one of Life's greatest calamities. Hence the wise man said, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. . . . It is better than precious ointment."

Similar in nature, but infinitely greater in degree, is "our Father's" regard for *his name*. Therefore, amid the sublimities of Sinai, in his perpetual moral law, as one of the ten commandments, he wrote, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Hence, on other occasions he said, "I will sanctify my great name;" "My name shall be great among the Gentiles;" "How should my name be polluted?" Jehovah thus explains his fearful dealings with Egypt, — "*I wrought for my name's sake*, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom ye were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing you forth out of the land of Egypt." "According to thy name,

so is thy praise." "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee."

To this attitude of the divine fatherhood, our adorable Lord appealed in his prayer, when he cried, "Father, glorify thy name!" and we read in the twelfth chapter of John's Gospel, that, "Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I *have glorified it, and will glorify it again.*"

Behold in all this the requisition of our God, and the depth of his desire that *his name* should be "hallowed"! With it, his honor, his declarative glory, and his government are identified.

With such regard for "that by which he is known," with what righteous indignation he must have beheld that work of Bonaventure, a cardinal of the Papal Church, who prepared a Litany for the Virgin Mary, by taking portions of the Psalms of the Bible, and substituting her name in place of that of Jehovah! And yet the Romish Church *has canonized Bonaventure*, who thus sinned most grievously, insulted Deity most traitorously. The Lord God is a jealous God; and he will not allow his glory to

be given to another. The vast interests of the universe demand that his name should be kept exclusively "holy and reverend." Jehovah hath sworn by himself, "As I live, the whole earth shall be filled with *my glory!*"

3. *Our welfare demands it.*

In the realm of souls, as truly as in that of matter, there are established orders of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent. One of these connections is, that only as we have such knowledge of and love for God as our Father, as will lead us to hallow his name, shall we either properly appreciate or obey him. With this regard for his name, therefore, is associated submission to his will; and, with such submission, all of our well-being for time and eternity is connected. So, also, just in the ratio that we thus hallow his name, in that ratio will we be impressed with himself, his character, his attributes, his authority, his righteousness, his love for us, his care over us, and the identity of his glory with our welfare. And just in the degree that our natures are thus impressed will our judgment bow to his decisions; our affections intwine about him,

and go out towards all that he loves; our will sweetly yield to his will; "our feet run in the way of his commandments;" and our entire natures be conformed to his image. When, therefore, we hallow his name, we fundamentally promote our own highest good; and, when we do not, we injure ourselves.

"Oh, utter but the name of God
Down in your heart of hearts,
And see how from the world at once
All tempting light departs!"

III. *How we may "hallow" the holy name.*

1. By our *words.*

What power there is in words! How much you can elevate or depress, honor or dishonor, a name, by what you say about it, by the manner in which you use it, by the tone of voice and expression with which you speak of it! So, by never triflingly, but always reverently speaking the *sacred name*, in conversation, in prayer, and in hymns of praise, we honor, sanctify, hallow it.

No chants of the olden time were more grand or more appropriate than those in which Jeho-

vah's name was magnified; and the temple rang with the words, "Give glory due his name;" "Let us exalt his name together;" "Praise ye the name of the Lord!" "Who shall not fear thee, and glorify thy name, O Lord? for thou art holy."

No promise is more explicit than this, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise." This is an essential part of "the sacrifice of our lips," which is well-pleasing to our Father.

And the spirit of this forbids all senseless repetitions, undue familiarity, and irreverent use of His name, either in conversation, prayer, or praise. *Is there not occasion for attention to this point?* Are there not many, "who are called by his name," who in their use of it employ the same familiarity as when speaking of one who is their equal? Do they not forget *who he is*, and *what* he is? that "holy and reverend is his name"? that "he is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders"? and that angels veil their faces before him? The same spirit most emphatically condemns profanity, which, instead of hallowing, desecrates

his name. How lamentable the prevalence of this vice! How inexpressibly sad to hear men, young men, and sometimes mere boys, indulging in this low vulgarity and abominable sin! Dr. Chapin said truly, that, "Despite all refinement, the light and habitual taking of God's name betrays a coarse nature and a brutal will. Profaneness is *an awful vice.* Whose name is it you so lightly use? That name of God! Have you ever pondered its meaning? Have you ever thought *what* it is that you mingle thus with your passion and your wit? It is the name of him whom angels adore, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain!"

"Among the Hebrews, the name 'Jehovah' was never pronounced, except by the high priest once a year; and, in reading the Scripture aloud, it was passed over in reverent silence, or the word 'Lord's substituted for it."

"It chills my blood to hear the blest Supreme
Rudely appealed to on each trifling theme."

Will you tell me what is more distressing to a spiritually intelligent mind than the evidence

that some young men think it manly, brave, smart, to swear? Are such so ignorant that they do not know that profanity is vicious, that it is ungentlemanly, that the lower men descend in degradation the more they swear? Do they not know, that, while other vices have palliations, this has none? Necessity often leads to theft; revenge to murder; and other sins plead strength of inclination, force of appetite, promise of reward, or the power of temptation in some tremendous form. But what gain, what gratification, what pleasure, what conceivable benefit, can come to any one from the defiant, profane use of that name which angels speak only with adoring awe!

Young men, profanity is an unnatural, profitless, low, Heaven-defying sin, — a sin of such magnitude that it violates the command which God put third in the order of the moral law, where he said, "*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;* for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Why! in many cases, even the heathen do not dare to use the names of their gods when they swear, but employ obscene words instead.

Blaspheming and cursing are the employment of devils.

In "Washington's Orderly Book," under date of April 3, 1776, the following is recorded: "The general is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice hitherto little known in an American army, is growing into a fashion. He hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it; and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have but little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms *if we insult Him by our impiety and folly:* added to this, it is a vice *so mean and low*, without any temptation, that a man of *sense and character despises it.*"

2. *In our hearts.*

There may be no reverent, adoring, prayerful words spoken, and yet the heart, that life-throbbing centre of our nature, may hallow His name. Such words are good, appropriate; but they may be on the lips and only there. How many are satisfied with having "said" prayers, or "sung" hymns! how many merely *repeat* the Lord's prayer! But "the Lord seeth not as man

seeth ; for man looketh at the outward appearance : the Lord looketh on the heart." His spiritual law says nothing about solemn words or tones of voice, bowing of the head or genuflexions of the body ; it says nothing about imposing ritualistic performances : but it says, " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and might." He must be worshipped in the " beauty of holiness." He says, " My son, give me thine heart ; " for " with the heart man believeth unto righteousness."

Jeremy Taylor prayed, " Let thy name, thy essence, and glorious attributes be honored and adored in all the world, believed by faith, loved by charity, celebrated with praise, thanked with the eucharist ; *and let thy name be hallowed in us* as it is in itself."

Cyprian said, " In praying this, we pray that his name may be hallowed *in* us."

And when he is thus hallowed in our hearts, not only as Creator, Upbuilder, Controller, Lawgiver, and Judge, but as our Father, — when he is loved as such, when his authoritative will is submitted to, — then his name is hallowed as it can be by no mere words.

Then sometimes the love and adoration of the heart become too great for words: no language can express them; but, though unuttered, they rise to his fatherhood richer than the music of rolling spheres, or the songs of angels who never fell.

Then is felt the tenderest concern for the divine glory, associated with the most sincere self-abasement. Luther felt this, when, near his death, he deplored and denounced the growing disposition to call the Reformation his work, and not *God's*. The same spirit was developed by Robinson of Leyden, when, bidding the Puritans farewell as they were about to go to the Western world, he warned them against the error which had made "the Lutheran refuse to go beyond Luther, and the Calvinist beyond Calvin," and which had gathered around those worthy names a glory and an honor which belonged only to the God whom both of them worshipped.

Finally, by our lives.

Reverent, adoring words, and reverent, adoring heart-emotions, hallow his name; but the spheres of both of these are limited, — the former to those who hear the words; the latter to God, who alone seeth the heart.

There is a wider range of influence than that possessed by either of these; viz., *the sphere of our daily life*. By it we touch the world, and exert our widest influence. If, through our spirit and by our conduct everywhere, we develop the character of children of God, then shall we best hallow the name of our Father who is in heaven. What so honors a good earthly father as to have his children grow up pure, pious, and noble? What sheds such lustre on a parent's name as virtuous worth and deserved respectability in his children? What brings such blood-red shame to a father's cheek, what so stabs to its centre a father's heart, what so bows in despair a father's head, what brings down his gray hairs in such grief to an untimely grave, as unworthy, wicked conduct in his children?

But all this only shadows forth the similar emotions in the heart of divine fatherhood over sinful children, which are expressed in that infinitely pathetic exclamation, "Hear, O heavens, and be astonished O earth! for I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me!" "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Allow me, in closing, to outline to you the thought already presented in this lecture. I have expounded to you this petition, demonstrated to you the propriety of it, and shown you how His name may be hallowed by lip, by heart, by life.

May he who has taught us thus to pray, give us grace that will enable us to reduce this divine theory to faithful, constant practice! Let us join in singing this rare old hymn by Thomas Cotteril.

"Thee we adore, eternal Lord!
We praise thy name with one accord.
Thy saints, who here thy goodness see,
Through all the world do worship thee.

To thee aloud all angels cry,
And ceaseless raise their songs on high;
Both cherubim and seraphim,
The heavens, and all that dwell therein.

The apostles join the glorious throng;
The prophets swell the immortal song;
The martyr's noble army raise
Eternal anthems to thy praise.

Thee, holy, holy Father, King!
Thee, thee, Lord God of hosts, they sing!
Thus earth below, and heaven above,
Resound thy glory and thy love."

IV.

HIS KINGDOM.

"Thy kingdom come."

MATT. vi. 10.

HIS KINGDOM.

"The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fixed thy word, thy saving power remains,
Thy realm forever lasts, thine own Messiah reigns."

I. *WHAT is a kingdom?*

It is not, of course, a democracy. That is a state in which the people exercise the powers of sovereignty, either in their own persons, — as they did in the pure democracies of ancient Greece, — or in a republic, where sovereignty is lodged in, and exercised by, representatives elected by the people. Our country is a republic. A kingdom exists where sovereignty is lodged in one person, — a king, — whose authority is with or without limitation. The ideal of a kingdom is, however, realized in an absolute monarchy.

What, then, is the kingdom of God?

In our classification, there are three kingdoms which belong to him. Of these, the first is the *material*, which includes all animate and inanimate existence. Over that realm, in all of its minuteness and immensity, its unreached heights and unfathomed depths, its unmeasured lengths and breadths, by virtue of his creatorship, he is King. Hence the sublime exclamation of Nehemiah, "Thou, even thou, art God alone: thou hast made the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein." In this realm, he is supreme; his laws reach and control every thing: the shadow of his throne is projected over the entire material universe. Next, there is *the kingdom of providence*. This embraces the world of events, which constitute the material of history: over this, too, he is absolute Sovereign. "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." By his power and wisdom, he not only directs and controls all the operations of nature, but causes all the good wrought by men and nations, and so overrules all the evil as to make the wrath

of man praise him, and to restrain the remainder; while, through both, he consummates his own eternal purposes. With reference to this, we read, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, 'Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and, as I have purposed, so shall it stand. I am God; and there is none else: I am God; and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, saying, My counsels shall stand; and I will do all my pleasure.'" In the grand chant of the ancient temple, — "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, and the multitude of the isles be glad," — we find a grateful acknowledgment of this universal truth.

Besides these kingdoms of nature and providence, there is another, — *the realm of souls.* Of this domain also he is lawful Sovereign, by virtue of creatorship and ownership. But, alas! within it rebellion is broken out, which has dethroned him, and enthroned sinful selfishness; which has despised his authority, dishonored his law, and defied his will. Hence we read, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. There is none

that understandeth, that seeketh after God: they are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy." "Madness is in their hearts." "The carnal mind is enmity against God." "They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good — no, not one." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." It is to the coming of his kingdom in this realm of rebellious souls, that the petition before us directly refers.

The scriptural use of the phrase, "kingdom of God," may be thus analyzed. It is applied first to *individual souls*. We read, that when the Pharisees demanded "When the kingdom of God should come," our Lord answered them, and said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or lo, there! for behold the kingdom of God *is within you*." He also compared it unto leaven, which a woman hid in three measures of meal; to the mustard seed, and to treasure hidden in the field. We also read, that "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy

Ghost." All of which statements are expressive of individual experiences.

Next, this phrase is applied to that aggregate of human souls which constitutes the mystical body of Christ, — the *spiritual, invisible Church*, — with its doctrines, its varied organic and inorganic manifestations and influences in the world. Finally, it is applied *to heaven*, where is especially located the throne, and are especially manifested all the ineffable insignia of divine royalty. Thus you see, that the phrase "kingdom of God" is applied in the Bible *elementally* to an individual soul, *aggregately* to the entire spiritual Church, and *fruitionally* to heaven.

Leighton said, "The inward kingdom of grace is the way and preparation for that of glory; and the outward kingdom of grace, in the visible Church, is the means of establishing and increasing the inward: so that both of them look forward to the kingdom of glory as their utmost end, and shall terminate in it."

II. Here an important question arises. *Is God out of Christ, or God in Christ, King over the soul-realm?*

In answering this, theologies differ, sects disagree, and mightiest controversial battles are fought. Let us seek to discover what the Scriptures teach concerning it. Understand that the question is this, Is the Deity, in his own spiritual, infinite, inconceivable personality, King in this realm, or is he supreme there in the person of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ?

Of old, this kingdom was so clearly prophesied and promised, that a delivering and reigning king became for ages the jubilant hope of the Jewish people. The same prophet who foretold the rise and fall of the Grecian and Persian Empires, and the extent and durability of the Roman power, predicted, that "In those days shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms: and it shall stand forever." "I saw in the night visions: and behold! *one like the Son of man* came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; and they brought him near before him. And there was given

him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Amid the glory of the Augustan era, the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled, which had been uttered centuries before, "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end."

The prophecies of Micah and Zachariah were also fulfilled, which predicted, "Thou Bethlehem-Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting." "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! for, behold, thy King cometh!" With reference to the same person, we read in the second Psalm, "I have set my King upon my holy hill, Zion. I will declare the decree,

— the Lord has said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

In accordance with all this, at the appointed time we behold the Lord Jesus assert the prerogatives of this divine royalty. Assuming the centre of the spiritual world, he proclaimed, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." "I and my Father are one." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "My kingdom is not of this world." Thence we behold him issuing laws, and performing all the functions of absolute spiritual kingship. Oh! they plaited a crown of thorns in mock-

ery around his sacred brow, not dreaming, poor, ignorant, sinful men! that the inconceivably glorious diadem of the kingdom of God had already been placed there by the hand of the eternal Father. But, what they saw not, the spiritual vision of the penitent thief perceived, when with dying breath he prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." What could be more worthy of this sublime prerogative than the royal proclamation issued before his ascension? "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* Go ye therefore into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature; and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Confirmatory is the inspired assurance, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Therefore it is, that on his vesture and in his thigh is emblazoned the divine title, "*King of kings, and Lord of lords.*"

III. Every kingdom *has laws*, which embody the preceptive and prohibitory will of its king.

We accordingly find that the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is a code of laws, issued by his authority, embodying all the will of God concerning us found in the Old Testament, together with new revelations and regulations appertaining to the perpetual spiritual kingdom. Friends, the world is full of speculations, reasonings, philosophizing about soul-duty. Men tell you what they believe, and what they disbelieve; what they think reasonable, and what they deem irrational; what they like, and what they dislike. But I submit to you, that the laws of a kingdom are found in its statute books, and that the duty of subjects is to ascertain and obey what is there required. Even so with regard to soul-duty: we affirm, that it is revealed in the law and testimony of our King, and that our duty and privilege is to seek for it there, and yield implicit obedience to it when found. This is the law-book of the kingdom of God; and I deny the right of minister or priest, of church or association, presbytery or synod, bishop, cardinal, or pope, *to*

make any thing contrary to this, or in addition to it, binding on the human conscience. Inconceivably vast are the issues which cluster around this doctrine at the present time. Two names stand before the public in connection with it most prominently, because they hold and advocate directly opposing views. One of these is Archbishop Manning of England, who, in a late address, said, "The Roman pontiff is the whole Church of God; for it is all contained in him: and, where the head acts, all act with him." In another part of the same address, he puts the following language in the mouth of the pope: "I claim to be the supreme judge and director of the consciences of men, — of the peasant that tills the fields, and the prince that sits on the throne; of the household that lives in privacy, and the legislature that makes laws for a kingdom. *I am the sole, last, and supreme judge of what is right and wrong.*"

The other is Père Hyacinthe, who, perhaps unconsciously, has written words almost identical with those of Huss the martyr, uttered four hundred and fifty years ago. In one of his letters, we find the following passage: "I raise,

therefore, before the holy father and the council, my protestation as Christian and preacher, against the doctrines and practices, calling themselves Roman, but which are not Christian. I appeal to thy tribunal, O Lord Jesus! It is in thy presence that I write these lines. It is at thy feet, after having prayed much, suffered and waited much, that I sign them. I have confidence, that, if men condemn them on earth, thou wilt approve them in heaven. *That is sufficient for me, living or dying.*" To that loyal utterance of fidelity to the only and ever blessed Potentate, I hear approving response from the throne itself. Oh! if the Christian world would unite in such acknowledgment of the supreme kingship of Christ, and would submissively bow to his will, as revealed in the New Testament, then would Ephraim no more vex Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim; then would the now-divided sacramental host of God's elect be united in one: and over them all would float in glory the majestic banner, on whose ample folds the world would read, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

IV. Kingdoms have *characteristics* peculiar to themselves.

What are those of the kingdom of God?

1. *Lawful authority.* Our King is no usurper of the throne. He did not tread his way to it over the rights of any beings. His is a legitimate monarchy. He is Sovereign by the highest and truest "divine right."

2. *Immaculate rectitude.* Lawful authority among men may err. It often enacts unjust laws. Our King never made an unjust requisition or prohibition. He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. He sitteth on the throne of his holiness; and they who are nearest that throne evermore adoringly sing, "Holy and just are thy ways, thou King of saints."

3. *Almighty power.* There may be among men lawful authority and spotless rectitude, without ability to consummate beneficial purposes. Our King hath "all power." He is able, therefore, not only to enact, but to enforce laws; able to protect obedient, and punish disobedient, subjects; able to defend his kingdom from intestine foes and foreign aggressors.

Hence the grateful anthem, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty! because thou hast taken to thyself *thy great power*, and hast reigned."

4. *Infinite love.* If a government were one of lawful authority, rectitude, and power merely, it would command admiration, but never excite affection; for it needs an exhibition of love to attract love. "God is love;" and his creative, sustaining, and redemptive acts radiate with this essential characteristic of his nature. This is the fountain whence flow the streams of "long-suffering, goodness, and truth;" of "tender mercies and loving-kindnesses;" of "forgiveness and pardon." He is rich in mercy; "for his great love wherewith he loved us." This is the reason why "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful."

5. *Permanency and everlasting duration.* How many and mighty kingdoms have dissolved, and left not even wrecks behind! "The throne of our God is for ever and ever." "His dominion is an everlasting dominion." What majesty, sublimity, and magnificence are em-

bodied in this truth! Human thrones may totter, sceptres may fall, powerful governments be crushed, but "of the increase of his government there shall be no end."

6. *Ineffable glory.* Of old it was prophesied, "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom." I have time merely to direct attention to the glory embodied in the perfect character of our King; the glory of the principles of his reign; the glory of the methods by which he rules; and the glory of the personal and collective, temporal and eternal, results of his government.

V. We are now prepared, I trust, to fix attention *directly upon the petition*, "Thy kingdom come."

1. Consider the *nature* of the petition. You now perceive that it is a prayer for the personal enthronement of God in Christ as supreme over our hearts; his truths over our intellects; his will over our wills; his authority over our consciences; and the subjection of all our powers to his commands. Thus understood, what solemnity gathers around this familiar petition

which we have so often thoughtlessly uttered! It asks for the dethronement of selfishness, passion, and appetite, and the conformity of our entire nature to his holy will. Do we honestly desire this? Can we now conscientiously offer this prayer? Dare we offer it to the heart-searching God? Can we truthfully say, —

> "The dearest idol I have known,
> Whate'er that idol be,
> Help me to tear it from the throne,
> And worship only Thee?"

2. Consider the *extent* of this petition. Observe that it has no word of limitation: it is, "Thy kingdom come," — come over all the departments of *complex individual nature*. Verily it asks, that "the shadow of the throne may be projected over the board where man daily feeds; over the cradle, the school, and the ballot-box; over the shop and the railroad, the anvil, plough, and loom; over all that ministers to man's earthly comforts and corporeal needs as well as over the pillow where he lays down his throbbing head to die; and over the

grave where he has left child, wife, or friend to moulder." And it extends to *all human beings*. It prays, —

> "Thy kingdom come to every heart;
> In every bosom fix thy throne."

Thus it embodies the essential missionary spirit, the germ of that aggressive energy which proclaims "Christ for all the world, and claims all the world for Christ." It asks for the overthrow of all antagonistic powers, such as Judaism, Mahometanism, Heathenism, Romanism, and all other isms which oppose the sole and supreme reign of God in Christ over mankind.

3. Consider *the time* to which this petition refers. "Thy kingdom come," — when? What a vast amount of thought has been directed to, and volumes written upon, the nature of the kingdom of God, the millennium, and kindred topics! How many theories have been propounded, and speculations published, concerning the time of the coming of the kingdom! But look at the petition itself. Its tense is present. "Thy kingdom come," — come,

come now! Are we ready for this? whether we are, or not, I briefly indicate some reasons why we ought to be. It is the rightful due of the divine King. He ought to have immediate possession of the realm which belongs to him in fact and by unquestionable right, the control of which has so long been usurped by his enemies. Moreover, it is the immediate duty of every human soul penitently and believingly to acknowledge his kingship, and lovingly submit to his sway. Verily, every soul in every nation on earth ought this moment to say, —

"Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer,
Welcome to this heart of mine:
Lord, I make a full surrender;
Every power and thought be thine, —
Thine entirely,
Through eternal ages thine."

Finally, all the interests, individual and collective, material and spiritual, temporal and eternal, of all souls, demand it.

Having now shown you what and when this kingdom of God is, that God in Christ is its

king, six of its characteristics, the nature, extent, and time of this petition, I close this lecture, —

1. With a word of *exhortation*. "Seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all other things shall be added to you."

This is the first duty of every human being. It is first in importance, and ought to receive attention first in the order of time. With infinite condescension, King Jesus seeks admission into our souls, saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock! if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh" all obstacles within and without himself to my sovereignty, "I will grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." O friends! it is decreed "that every knee shall bow," either voluntarily or compulsorily. I pray you, in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God: bow to the sceptre of his mercy, extended by the scarred hand of our lawful King. Ground the weapons of your rebellion, and penitently, believingly, and sub-

missively acknowledge him as a loyal subject of his reign: and then, instead of being crushed beneath the triumphant car of the conquering Redeemer, you shall share in his glory; and your voices shall join in the grand chorus of heaven and earth, "Hallelujah; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Opposition to his kingdom is as hopeless as it is wicked. His kingdom ought to come, must come, and assuredly will come. Shall its final triumphs bury our hopes and souls in ruin? Shall we be of those who must finally meet the Lord Jesus merely as victor and judge, and who shall hear him declare from the great white throne the sentence of everlasting banishment from hope and heaven?

2. A word of *direction.*

If we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we must use the divinely-appointed means for its coming.

The "word of the kingdom" must be circulated far and wide. Servants of the King must go wherever lost humanity has gone, and proclaim "the good tidings of great joy" embodied in the gospel proclamation of mercy. We must

cheerfully give of our money for the support of those who go far hence among the Gentiles to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. We must nourish and cultivate the missionary spirit. We must be willing to submit to self-denials, in order more efficiently to aid it. The coming of the kingdom of Christ, in all the world, must be a chief object of thought, earnest desire, fervent prayer, and laborious effort. Our own lives as Christians must so beautifully exemplify the blessedness of the reign of Christ, that others shall be attracted, and led to bow to his mild sceptre. Precious truth! every one may do something towards the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the world. To that mission each of us is called, whoever we may be, whatever sphere we may occupy, whatever the degree of our talents, or amount of our possessions. This power have all the saints. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. Nothing that we give or do for his cause is unknown or unnoticed by him. With infinite appreciativeness he accepts it as having been done for or given to himself. He regards "the cup of cold water" and "the widow's mite." Oh! then,"

"Rouse thee to *this work* of high and holy love,
And thou an angel's happiness shalt know,
Shalt bless the earth while in the world above;
The good begun by thee shall outward go
In many a branching stream, and onward flow;
The seed that in these few and fleeting hours
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,
And yield thee fruit divine in heaven's immortal bowers."

Finally, a word of *encouragement.*

Beloved, *the kingdom is coming.* By night and by day, with every rolling year, through all the discoveries of science, the achievements of art, the diffusion of sound learning, the progress of true civilization, the spread of "the truth as it is in Jesus," the application of his principles to human life, — verily, despite the opposition of a rebellious "world" with its infidel philosophies, "the flesh" with its multiform sensualities, and "the devil" with all his tremendous power and malignant cunning, — the kingdom of God is coming.

It is almost impossible for us to understand how much it hath already come. Our Christ hath already established his throne in millions

on millions of human souls: his truths have reconstructed many human governments, laws, creeds, habits, and the names of half the nations of the earth. Yea, as Marvel sang, he has

> "Cast the kingdoms old
> Into another mould."

It is quite impossible for us to conceive what triumphs, amidst apparently hopeless circumstances, this kingdom has achieved. "The kings of the earth have set themselves together; and the rulers have taken council together against the Lord and his anointed." The blood of martyrs has flowed like rivers. But slowly, steadily, the Messiah's kingdom has advanced, and is advancing, diffusing light and love, quickening and transforming energy, elevating and ennobling the race, reinstating mankind into their true relations to God and to each other.

How significant the testimony which Napoleon, the mightiest of modern conquerors, bore to this at St. Helena, when he mournfully said, "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires! But upon what did we

rest the creation of our genius? Upon *force*. Jesus Christ founded his empire upon *love;* and, at this hour, millions of men would die for him! My armies have forgotten me even while living. Nations pass away, thrones crumble; but his kingdom remains. What a proof of the divinity of Christ! With an empire so absolute, he has but one single aim, — the spiritual amelioration of individuals, purity of conscience, the union to that which is true, which is the holiness of the soul. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, and adored, and *is extending over the whole earth!*"

On the door of an old mosque in Damascus, which was once a Christian Church, but which for twelve centuries has ranked among the holiest of Mahometan sanctuaries, are inscribed these remarkable words, —

"Thy kingdom, O Christ! is an everlasting kingdom. Thy dominion endureth through all generations." This inscription remains unimpaired at the present day; and it is a record in stone of the decree of the eternal Father, concerning his royal Son, whose gradual fulfilment

past ages have witnessed, and whose perfect realization shall be attested to by all the "ages to come."

Let this encourage your faith, O Christian! inspire your zeal, and energize your efforts. His kingdom is coming: its victorious banners float on every breeze. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." Verily, wherever God's light shines, his truth shall shine; wherever his wind blows, his spirit shall breathe; wherever his water flows, his salvation shall flow; wherever sin abounds, his grace shall much more abound. The crucified shall be universal conqueror. The brow that wore the crown of thorns shall wear the crown of all the earth. Heaven and earth shall yet ring with the grand acclaim, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." Just before his death, the good and great Dr. Owen said, "I am going to him whom my soul loves. I am leaving the ship in a storm; but, while the great Pilot is on board, the loss of a poor under-rower will not be missed." In 1683, Martin Luther, amidst the most terrific storms of papal perse-

cution, exclaimed, "*I know that Christ reigns over this world; and, in this confidence, I will not fear ten thousand popes.*" No wonder God's ancient people, amid their trials and discouragements, shouted, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." Blessed assurance, "He that is to come *will come, and will not tarry.*" Join me in the prayer, "Even so; come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

"He is coming; and the tidings
Are rolling wide and far,
As light flows out in gladness
From yon fair morning star.

He is coming; and the tidings
Sweep through the willing air,
With hope that ends forever
Time's ages of despair.

Old earth from dreams and slumber
Wakes up, and says, Amen.
Land and ocean bid him welcome;
Flood and forest join the strain."

V.

HIS WILL.

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

MATT. vi. 10.

HIS WILL.

"I worship thee, sweet will of God!
And all thy ways adore;
And, every day I live, I long
To love thee more and more.

He always wins who sides with God;
To him no chance is lost:
God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost.

I have no cares, O blessed will
For all my cares are thine:
I live in triumph, Lord! for thou
Hast made thy triumphs mine."

THE Lord's Prayer is not a collection of disconnected sentences. Its petitions are logically and closely related, so as to constitute a unity harmonious and symmetrical. "*Our Father which art in heaven*" teaches us to filially acknowledge the divine fatherhood, and to cordially recognize the human brotherhood. "*Hallowed be thy name*" follows, because such adoring reverence is our first duty toward *our Father*. In

"*Thy kingdom come*," we are next instructed to acknowledge his rightful sovereignty, and pray for its immediate and universal establishment. The petition before us now follows in logical sequence: for it is simply a devout recognition of the service due our Father-King, and the expression of an earnest desire that it may be rendered to him by all mankind.

I am impressed that the subject thus presented is of supreme importance; that wrong views of it lie at the basis of all false theologies, and inure to the ill-being of souls, now and forever; and, on the other hand, that right views of it lie at the foundation of all true theology, and of spiritual well-being both here and hereafter. Hear me patiently, candidly, and then decide as to whether my impression is correct or incorrect.

I. *What is "the will" of any being?* This term is used in three different senses. It is employed to denote the function of determination, — the volitional faculty, by which the power of choice is exercised. It is also applied to the determination or choice made by this

faculty. Thus we apply the term "will" to the power of volition, and also to the act thus caused. But, in law, "the voluntary disposition of an estate by testament is called a will."

Now, *what is the will of God?*

Primarily, it is that attribute of the divine nature by which he determines, chooses, either to do or not to do; secondarily, it expresses what he has determined, decided upon; and finally, inasmuch as volitions are expressed by words, we apply it to the Bible because it is the "word of God,"—the revelation of his will.

Do you know the radical meaning of the common legal word "testament"? It denotes an authentic instrument in writing, by which a person declares his will as to the disposal of his effects after his death. Thus defined, how full of meaning are the titles of our Bible, "the Old and the New Testaments"! The two books which constitute the one are thus named because they are the *authentic instruments in writing* by which God has revealed his will to man. In the prayer for the coming of his kingdom, we are taught to acknowledge his

rightful sovereignty over the realm of souls. But our sense of justice leads us to expect that the infinitely righteous King would plainly reveal what his will concerning us is; and this he has done in these inspired Testaments.

Speculations concerning the basis and standard of moral obligation have been almost innumerable. The most prominent of these, however, have made them to consist in agreeableness to the fitness of things, or conformity to nature and right reason, or in the coincidence of our conduct with the perfect and the true, or in its tendency to promote public happiness. Paley affirms, that "whatsoever is expedient is right:" it is due him, however, to remember, that his view of expediency was very comprehensive. The Holy Scriptures, which Newton affirmed contained "the profoundest philosophy," make short work of all these speculations by leading us directly to the source of all moral obligation, when they say, that *sin is a transgression of the law*, and that the law of which sin is a transgression is simply the revealed expression of the divine will. Thus the rule of obligation which philosophers have

tried to arrive at by circuitous and uncertain methods is exhibited clear as the light in the petition, "Thy will be done." Dr. Clark truthfully said, "Governing according to *law* and *reason*, and governing according to *will* and *pleasure*, are, among men, the two most opposite forms of government; while, with respect to God, *they are but two different names for one and the same thing.*"

The divine will is guided by infinite wisdom, by eternal justice, and infinite goodness. Through our reason and conscience, he makes developments of his ever-righteous will; but through his word it is revealed so plainly, that "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Here he speaks to us through prophets and inspired apostles, but chiefly through the revelations of his Son, of whom it is written "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of *grace* and *truth.*"

II. *This petition assumes*, that the will of God is not done on the earth.

Here we must discriminate. The Testaments make a distinction in regard to the divine will, which is overlooked by many; and that oversight is the cause of much error. There are those who say, "God is almighty, and therefore is able; he is all-wise, and therefore knows how to accomplish his own will." But these Testaments reveal that "will" in distinct departments, as sometimes denoting what *shall be*, at other times what *ought to be:* sometimes it refers to the great plan, or purpose by which he controls the operations of nature, and the events of providence, according to the eternal choices of his absolute will. In Nature, he consummates it through laws, which are only the methods of his operation, — by mere force, naked omnipotence. In Providence, he accomplishes it through the workings of great moral principles, which are directed, energized, and sustained by himself, "Whereby he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and restraineth the remainder." In Nature and Providence, therefore, his will is done. In these spheres, "He

doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?" But his will concerning *human souls* is embodied in his spiritual laws, which are addressed to our spiritual natures, which he himself endowed with a will, not to be controlled by mere force,—a will whose freedom is essential to responsibility, and which, therefore, may obey him or not.

Older theologians express this distinction in the phrases, "God's will of purpose and his will of precept; his will of control and of command."

Without amplifying upon this distinction further, I direct attention to a few illustrations of it. Our divine Master was foretold in Messianic prophecy as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!" In the record of his earthly life, we find him declaring, "It is my meat and drink to do the will of him that sent me." When preaching in a private house, one came in, and said, "Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." Pausing in his discourse, he exclaimed, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" And

he answered his own questions, by declaring that "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, my sister, and my mother." In his immortal Sermon on the Mount, he said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

In the same Testament we read of "doing the will of God from the heart;" of "standing complete in all the will of God;" of living "not in the lusts of men, but to the will of God;" of being, "not conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Among the last declarations of the word we read, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life." "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

With these explanations, is not that which this petition assumes fearfully true? Is it not obvious that the will of God *is not* done on the earth? When men triumphantly say, "Who hath resisted his will?" and endeavor

to establish a fatalistic excuse for their sins, I answer, Your question is big with fallacy: you confound things that differ. That will, as expressed in the laws of Nature or in the principles of Providence, none can resist; but, as embodied in *spiritual laws*, all depraved souls can and do resist: reason, conscience, and observation unite with revelation in affirming this. I make no reference now to the outwardly wicked, the vulgarly vicious, the drunken, licentious, profane, and abandoned, but point you to the world's ways of living, — the amusements, the principles upon which most of its business is transacted and politics conducted, — as pregnant proofs that the will of God is not only ignored, but perpetually violated. Satan, that arch-foe of God and man, leads the world "captive at his will." Selfishness reigns supreme in every unrenewed soul. Each knows, that when the law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, might, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself," he neither does this nor desires to; that when our Lord saith, "This is the will of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent," he deliberately rejects Him; that

when the Word saith, "He will have all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth," that an experimental knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, — which is God's only method of saving men, — is persistently rejected.

There are multitudes who profess to believe neither in the necessity nor reality of what is expressed in the familiar phrases, "experiencing religion," "being converted," "becoming Christians," "a change of heart." Some declare it to be a delusion, — an unintelligent effect of fanatical excitement. Others, more observant and candid, admit its reality, but affirm its incomprehensibility. Friends, the simple fact is, that it is merely an inward change, produced by the Holy Spirit and the truth, whereby the rebellious human will becomes lovingly submissive to the divine will; and the soul cries, —

> "I yield, I yield; I can hold out no more.
> I sink, by dying love compelled,
> And own thee Conqueror."

Verily, it is that change whereby he who all his life has been disobedient, recklessly careless, and defiantly opposed to God's will, penitently

exclaims, "Lord, what *wilt thou* have me to do?" By all those in whom such an experience has never been realized, the will of God is not "done" at all; and alas! with regard to those who have realized it, the old native spirit of disobedience too often develops itself. Alas! individual and church histories abound in overwhelming evidence of this. The assumption of our petition is thus shown to be fearfully, mournfully, true.

III. But why pray about this? Reason, conscience, and revelation unite in affirming the duty of practical submission to God. All admit that his will ought to be done by us. *Why, then, not immediately go to work and do it?* Why make that a matter of prayer which ought to be attended to by ourselves? This is both a proper and an important question. In answering it, I refer you to some facts concerning our natures of which we are all conscious. Our souls are alienated from God: they are naturally rebellious, and indisposed either to submit to his authority or to perform his precepts. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: it is not

subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." We find our carnality refusing to leave its usurped throne, and fortifying itself there against the dictates of reason, the impulsions of conscience, the demands of interest, as well as the claims of God the Father, the entreaties of God the Son, and the strivings of God the Spirit. I tell you that there are many persons whose judgments are convinced of their duty to God, but who find within themselves a power of resistance stronger than reason and conscience combined, stronger than the power of the highest motives, stronger than their own volitionary power, which keeps them from forming and exercising a determining choice of God's will as their rule of life.

Now, what is that?

O friends! it is a depraved, alienated, selfish, sin-loving heart, whose power is such, that of ourselves we will never do the will of God. This is the reason why our Lord taught us to pray with regard to this matter, that he would "work in us both to will and to do." This is what the old theologians properly called *the grace of obedience.* Here, and here alone, is

efficient help for our poor, lost, depraved humanity, — the power of God's Spirit to do in us what we cannot do for ourselves. How precious is the promise, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Do you feel your need of this? "Ask, and ye shall receive." Augustine used to pray, "Give what thou commandest, and then command what thou wilt."

This is God's method of making. He makes "his people willing in the day of his power." Thus read the promises of the new covenant: "I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." "I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh, *that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them:* and they shall be my people; and I will be their God." "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every

good work *to do his will*, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight." I submit to you, that this dependence is taught in the very *form* of our petition. Observe, it is not, "Let us do thy will," but "thy will be done;" thus teaching our need of divine working in us as prerequisite to our doing of his will. This his people have always recognized; and to it Isaiah gave expression, when he said, "Thou, Lord, hast wrought all our works in us."

IV. This petition specifies the *manner* and *degree* in which His will should be done in the earth, — "as it is done in heaven."

In a religious book which has had a large circulation, the following is recorded as a fact, which I find it difficult to believe, because such stories are ordinarily great exaggerations. It is there stated that a Sabbath-school teacher gave this question to her class, "How is the will of God done in heaven?" She gave them a week to prepare individual answers. At the appointed time, the following replies were given, each by a different member of the class: "It is done cheerfully;" "Immediately;" "Com-

pletely;" "Unitedly;" "Lovingly;" "*Unwearedly;*" and "Without asking questions." If this really transpired, that must have been a remarkably well-instructed class. Baxter gave nearly the same answer in his "Poor Man's Family Book," where we read, that, "in heaven the will of God is done understandingly, sincerely, fully, readily, delightfully, unweariedly, and concordantly."

Archbishop Usher, Baxter's contemporary and friend, in his "Body of Divinity," says, "The angels obey the divine will willingly, speedily, sincerely, fully, and constantly."

This, doubtless, well represents the degree and manner in which His will is done by the spirits of just men made perfect, and the angels in heaven, who "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." "They do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word." Every reason for thus doing it there, exists for doing it here. Our loved ones who have gone from us thither — sweet babes, dear companions, and fellow-workers — are thus doing it there; and so it ought to be done here. Expe-

rience and observation show that in the ratio that his will is done in the earth, this world becomes like heaven.

Let us not rest satisfied, therefore, without aiming at heavenly conformity to the "good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

V. There is *another application* of this petition, however, to which I now direct attention. All I have said thus far has regarded the divine will, in relation to *action;* but this petition refers as well to the duty of *submission* to that will. In illustration of this, come with me to the Garden, just outside the wall of Jerusalem. It is night: beneath the umbrageous boughs of wide-spreading olive-trees, One is kneeling who always did the will of God; but now he is called to submissively suffer it. His form trembles with agony; out of his quivering pores issue, as it were, great drops of blood. Hear that mournful cry which goes up to heaven out of that anguish-smitten heart, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; *nevertheless*, not as I will, but as thou wilt." In this infinitely pathetic scene behold our great example of unrepining submission to the divine will.

Ah, friends! in all our life-paths to heaven by the way of Calvary, we are called to enter what, to us, are dark Gethsemanes of bereavement, sorrow, and suffering, where our fondest hopes are blasted, severe struggles are to be endured, loved objects to be given up, and, wrapt in white shrouds, shut up in closed coffins, and laid away in cold graves. Such is the will of God: "Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Oftentimes his will comes athwart ours; oftentimes he refuses to answer our prayers; but he overrules the very things which we most deplore for our greatest good. Augustine, speaking of his mother, who had prayed earnestly that he might be prevented from going to Italy, lest he should fall into greater sin, though, in fact, it became the means of his conversion, beautifully says, "God refused her once, to grant her what she had prayed for always." To this Shakspeare alludes when he says, —

> "We, ignorant of ourselves,
> Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
> Deny us for our good; so we find profit
> By losing of our prayers."

Oftentimes He sends adversity, when we think we ought to have prosperity; failure, when we think we deserve success; darkness, when we desire light; sorrow, when we pant for happiness; small duties, when we think ourselves qualified for great ones; contraction of sphere, when we sigh for enlargement. Oftentimes, thus, our pride is mortified, and we feel humiliated.

Oh, then to hear his voice saying, "Be still, and know that I am God;" and to submissively respond, "Even so, Father, for thus it seemeth good in thy sight"!

A noble example of this is related in the record of the invasion of Rome by the Huns. A Christian bishop asked Attila who he was. The king replied, "I am the scourge of God." The bishop immediately rejoined, "The messenger of God is welcome;" and cheerfully submitted to martyrdom, exclaiming that "he durst not oppose the scourge of God, remembering that he (God) scourged his beloved Son." In his official report of a great battle, the general commanding declared that the best man in the field that day was a soldier who had his arm

lifted up against an enemy, but who, on hearing the trumpet sound a retreat, checked himself, and dropped his arm without striking a blow. How sublime was the attitude of the old prophet, when, amid his last utterances, he averred before heaven and earth, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places."

"God doth need
Neither man's work nor his best gifts: who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest.
They also serve who only stand and wait."

The hour cometh when for us all the springs of earth shall run dry; when we shall lie down to rise no more, take our last look of this bright and beautiful world, gaze upon the faces and hear the voices of those we love most for

the last time; when the cold death-dew shall gather upon our brows, and the pains of dissolution tremble along our expiring nerves. Blessed, thrice blessed, he, who, amid all circumstances of life and death, shall be able to say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt; not my will, but thine, O God! be done."

Friends, the happiest man on this round earth is he, who, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, can say, "The will of my Father in heaven is my will; what he commands, I will endeavor to do; what he forbids, I will refrain from doing; what he calls me to suffer, I will submissively endure as designed for my greatest good and his glory; and the daily prayer of my life shall be, 'Thy will be done in earth, even as it is done in heaven.'" That man is richer, happier, than the wealthiest millionnaire, crowned king, or mitred priest, or he whose brow is wreathed with the world's proudest laurels.

With our own beloved Whittier, let us sing, —

"We see not, know not: all our way
Is night; with Thee alone is day.
From out the torrent's troubled drift,
Above the storm, our prayer we lift,
Thy will be done!

The flesh may fail, the heart may faint;
But who are we to make complaint,
Or dare to plead, in times like these,
The weakness of our love of ease?
Thy will be done!

We take with solemn thankfulness
Our burden up, nor ask it less;
And count it joy that even we
May suffer, serve, or wait for Thee,
Whose will be done!

Though dim as yet in tint and line,
We trace Thy picture's wise design,
And thank Thee that our age supplies
The dark relief of sacrifice.
Thy will be done!

And if, in our unworthiness,
Thy sacrificial wine we press;
If, from Thy ordeal's heated bars,
Our feet are seamed with crimson scars, —
Thy will be done!

Strike! Thou the Master, we Thy keys,
The anthem of the destinies!
The minor of Thy loftier strain,
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain, —
Thy will be done!"

VI.

DAILY FOOD.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

MATT. v. 11.

"Give us, day by day, our daily bread."

LUKE xi. 3.

DAILY FOOD.

"O God of earth and air and sea!
The hungry ravens cry to thee;
To thee the scaly tribes that sweep
The boundless bosom of the deep:
On thee all living creatures call,
Thou common Father, kind to all.
Then grant thy servants, Lord, we pray,
Our daily bread from day to day."

HEBER.

THERE are men, it grieves me to say, who honestly disbelieve in Christianity. If one of them were to ask, what I hold to be among the strongest evidences of its divinity, I would make this twofold answer. First, the *unselfishness* exemplified in and inculcated by Christianity. Every other religion nourishes, develops, and promotes human self-esteem. Why should it not be so? Like produces like. Streams can rise no higher than their sources; and, as every religion other than the Christian is the product of humanity, the influences thus

set in motion can result at the most in nothing higher than human self-culture. On the other hand, Christianity, which claims to be a revelation from God, is proven to be divine, in that it sets forth an ideal of unselfishness which is truly superhuman and supernatural. It displays in the love of God, who spared not his only-begotten Son, an example such as effectually humbles the natural heart of man, and deprives it of all its self-conceit. While, secondly, this religion still more strongly asserts its divine authorship in an elevation of the soul thus humbled to a spiritual likeness unto the God believed in, — a freedom, purity, and charity of nature not to be found under any other conditions of life.

Consider, now, in what way these truths, which are among the strongest evidences of the divinity of Christianity, have been developed in the portions of the Lord's Prayer which have been already before us.

Observe the tenderly beautiful exaltation of our humanity above the works or the word of God, the elevation of our souls even to himself, in the petition which leads us, as with the rever-

ent, loving, trustful spirit of true children, to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Surely that which thus uplifts fallen and alienated souls to God must be from God.

Observe, also, the superhuman unselfishness of the spirit which prays for the honor, dominion, and service of its father God before it makes any allusion to itself, or offers a single petition on its own behalf. Oh! in this strange self-abnegation, amid a world where to love self, acquire for self, enjoy self, and honor self, is ever the predominant tendency, my moral nature intuitively perceives, my reason is compelled to acknowledge, that which is more than human, that which is divine; yea, I see God.

In this prayer, all that we have thus far considered has led us away from self toward God. We now come to the human side of this petition, and are about to discover, that, to regard the glory of our Father as the first and chief end of our lives is not, by any means, to disregard or sacrifice our own true interests. Nay: the prayer saith no more of his name and

its sanctities, his kingdom and its triumphs, his will and its supremacy: but it proceeds to specify *our* bread, *our* sins, and *our* deliverance from evil. We are accordingly taught, first to pray for that by which our mortal life is sustained, — for the food by means of which our bodies are nourished.

There are two ways of treating such a subject as this: by *analysis*, — the separation of the topic into its parts, and the consideration of these in detail; and by *synthesis*, — the re-uniting of these elements, and the treatment of them as a whole. Both of these methods will be adopted in this discussion.

I. *Consider the following analysis of this petition*, —

1. We are taught to pray for "*bread*." This term stands for all food needed by our bodies. Beza rendered it "sufficient to uphold and sustain our bodies." In the Syriac version, it is rendered, "the bread of our necessity." We are not taught to pray for delicacies or superfluous luxuries, which harm the digestive organs, foul the blood, weaken the nerves, and sow the seeds of disease and destruction in the body.

2. We are taught to pray for "*our bread;*" not for that needed by others, or earned by them, but for that which comes honestly to us in the course of divine providence.

3. We are taught to pray for "*our daily bread,*" and thus, avoiding all inordinate anxiety about the future, to humbly depend day by day upon our Father's loving care.

4. We are taught to pray, "*Give* us this day our daily bread;" not to demand it as a matter of right, or to claim it as the object of purchase, but to implore it as an undeserved bounty at his hands.

5. We are taught to merge our personal wants in the collective needs of the great family to which we belong: "Give *us* (not *me*), give *us* (all of thy children in all circumstances) *our* daily bread."

Finally, we are taught to pray thus every day, "Give us *this day* our *daily* bread."

Having now treated this petition by analysis, let us combine its elements, and view them as a whole.

II. *This prayer assumes the existence of a di-*

rect and immediate relation between God as a cause, and our daily food as an effect.

It is clear, that, in the world's thought and practice, such a relation is denied or ignored. But it is equally evident that our Lord, in teaching us to offer this prayer, assumed that such a relation is a positive reality. Let us look at some of the reasons which assist and confirm faith in regard to this subject.

1. That there is such a connection between the Creator and the needs of the creature, *we should expect on a-priori grounds.* By this I mean, that if we admit that God is our Father, and that we his children are not self existent or supporting, our reason is compelled to infer that he who has made us thus dependent must have provided for the supply of our needs out of his own fulness. This being the case, the wants of our entire nature are under his care, and the body not less than the soul has a right to expect his bounty. As to the present and eternal interests of our immortal nature, which was in its spiritual capacities made in the divine image, we find it easy to believe that God has and will ever have an immediate concern for them; but

for our frail and perishing bodies, their daily material wants, we find it more difficult to assure ourselves that he has an equally direct solicitude. And yet the same reasoning which leads to belief in the former case of necessity justifies faith in the latter.

It was with regard to just these lower and physical wants of our lives, that Jesus said, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;" and he himself, before working the miracle to supply human want, said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat." Human fatherhood cares for the bodies of the children committed to it. They are inexpressibly dear, and we find highest pleasure in protecting and providing for them. And when we see how dependent their souls are upon the condition of their physical natures, we become conscious of an imperious duty, which receives impulsions from every instinct of our being, to make the amplest provision within our power for their necessities. God is our Father; and he thoroughly knows how, not only our mental growth, general de-

velopment, and happiness, but our ability to glorify him and do good to those around us, depend upon the supply of our physical needs, the full sustentation of our material natures.

Our bodies are to be presented a "living sacrifice;" but they cannot live without food. We are enjoined to "glorify God in our body and spirit;" but we can do neither without "our daily bread."

Assuredly, then, we are prepared to believe that there must be a direct relation between him and it.

2. *Our bodies are worthy of the divine care.*

There are two "isms" which I hold to be false. One is that mysticism which is so exclusively occupied with the spiritual nature that it ignores and dishonors the body, and which interprets our text and similar scriptures as referring merely to spiritual food. The other is that materialism which pays exclusive attention to the body, and ignores the deep necessities of the soul. The truth lies between these extremes. Both the spiritual and physical parts of our being are alike from God. They are the two factors which enter into and compose the in-

dividuality of human nature. Both have needs corresponding with their characters. Both are embraced in the resplendent scheme of redemption. Both are worthy of their origin. We find it easy to admit this in regard to our spiritual natures, with their grand capacities and magnificent possibilities, but fail to realize it in reference to the material part of our being. But I beg you to think of how worthy of divine origin and care our bodies are. A human body is the most complicated, delicate, wonderful, vitalized object in the world. It is a single system embodying many: it is a unit made up of an osseous, a muscular, a nervous, a circulating, a digestive, and a functional system, all combined in harmony, and endowed with the power of locomotion. Friends, no person can in any good degree comprehend the mysteries of his own physical nature, and not exclaim, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" None but a God could have designed and created such a marvellous combination of capacities, such a complication of mysteries, such powers of endurance, such adaptabilities to its complex object. It is the

earthly temple of the Holy Ghost. One of the inspired titles of our God is, "The Former of our bodies." He originated our recurrent necessities; and, with these facts before us, we feel assured that he must sustain a relation to them, upon the basis of which the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," can be intelligently uttered.

3. *Such a relation is assumed and taught in the Bible.*

In its first chapter, immediately after the record of man's creation, we read that "God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." After the flood he declared to Noah, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb. *I have given you all things.*" Elsewhere we read that "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man. . . . These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them, they gather. Thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good."

"Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. *Are ye not much better than they?* . . . Therefore take no [inordinate] thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? . . . For after all these things do the Gentiles [inordinately] seek; but your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of all these things. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all *these things shall be added unto you.*" "What man is there of you, who, if his son ask of him bread, will give him a stone? or, if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent; or, if he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more shall your Father* which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!" "Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Such is the briefest possible outline of the

argument for the existence of the relation assumed in this petition.

III. If, then, such a relation exists between our Father and our daily bread, *what is its nature and extent?*

That was a wonderful sermon which Paul preached on Mars Hill, when he had before him such an audience as even he had never addressed before. There were the wisest people, the most subtle reasoners, the profoundest sages, the most learned teachers, and the most eloquent orators in the world. Upon him were concentrated the sneer of the Epicurean, the statuesque derision of the Stoic, the dreamy gaze of the Academician, the scowl of a superstitious rabble, and the malice of bigoted Jews. But none of these things alarmed him. Nay, they merely aroused his consecrated genius to its sublimest effort, before which his hearers were as silent and dumb as the marble statues around them. I quote a few of his sublime utterances: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples

made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, seeing *he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;* and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. . . . For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." This is a sublime and truthful statement of our general relation to God. But the question before us now concerns the specific relation between him and our daily bread.

1. Those *secondary causes* by which it is produced are all of his creation and under his control.

The skill, enterprise, and power of man are prodigious; but I direct your attention to some great essentialities to the production of food which are beyond human control. Oh, what a delicate adjustment of all the elements of Nature is necessary, in order to make food a possibility! What huge, circling worlds must be constantly upheld and wisely guided, in order to the necessary adjustment of heat and cold!

What orbs must shine, vapors be formed into obscuring and rain-distilling clouds, tempests agitate, and zephyrs breathe; what myriad processes in the vast laboratory of Nature must be kept in fitting action; what a nice proportion must be preserved in the gases which constitute the atmosphere, — in order to the production of a cup of cold water, a loaf of bread, and all the other necessaries of life! Friends, if we had the power to trace the direct connection of our Father not merely in the origination, but in the preservation and vitalization, of all the secondary causes of the material world, the veriest unbeliever would be amazed, and exclaim, "Verily, in His hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind!"

In one of Bishop Heber's parish sermons we find this beautifully illustrated in the following passage: "When we witness the many dangers which threaten the springing and the rising grain; when we reckon the opposing dangers of drought and moisture, of parching heat or pinching cold, the blights which may taint, the worm which may consume, and the other alarms which the husbandman feels and fears,

we cannot but perceive that something more than the industry of man is required, and that it is with good reason we are taught to ask our daily bread of God; since no day in the year can be found, in which his blessing is not needed, either to preserve the seed, or to prosper the tender stalk, or to fill the ear, or to rebuke the mildew and the storm by which the maturer crop is endangered. And, when the food of many days is waving before our eyes, we can but feel an anxious joy, a solemn and in some degree mournful thankfulness, when we compare our unworthy lives with the unbounded mercies of God; when we recollect how little and how seldom we have thought of him who careth for us continually, and tremble lest even now our sins should interrupt the stream of his mercy, and that the improper use which we too often make of plenty should even yet turn our abundance into hunger." Who of you can think of him "upholding all things by the word of his power," and directing all the processes of Nature so as to produce food for us, and not exclaim, with a greater than even good Bishop Heber, "Marvellous are thy works,

Lord God Almighty, and that my soul knoweth right well! How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! if I should count them, they are more in number than the sand!"

A pastor in Edinburgh asked the children of his infant class, "Who gives you the bread you eat at dinner?" Almost every voice answered, "Mother." Then he asked, "Who gave it to your mother?" They answered, "The baker." "Who gave it to the baker?"—"The miller." "And who gave it to the miller?"—"The farmer."—"And who gave it to the farmer?" "The ground."—"And who gave it to the ground?" Then, for the first time, the thought of the divine Provider flashed upon those young minds; and with low voice solemnly they exclaimed, "God!" Alas! are we not all just like those children, in that we think of all intermediate instrumentalities and agencies *before* we think of the "Father of all our mercies"?

2. *Our ability to use the means* through which our daily food is obtained is from God.

Multitudes overlook this fact entirely. One says, "I have physical strength, ability to work:

I understand the laws of nature, and can make it give me my daily bread." Another, "I have skill, enterprise, and industry, and can make money, by which I can purchase abundant supplies." Others with complacency point to fortunes which they have amassed, and proudly boast of successes which have crowned their individual efforts. There is much truth in all these and similar expressions; but there is an ignoring of fundamental truth. Such practically forget that God is the "Father" of their spirits, and "Former of their bodies;" that he endowed them with all their physical and intellectual powers; that "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding;" that they themselves are his creatures; that the earth on which they stand, the air they breathe, the light which illumines their pathway, are all his. They forget that yon great sun, in whose unfathomed capacities there is ample room for thousands of worlds like ours, from which comes all our light and heat, by which all vitality is preserved, not only was created by him, but that "he causeth it to shine upon the evil and upon the good." They forget

that "he sendeth his rain upon the just and upon the unjust;" that "every good gift is from above;" that he "daily loadeth us with benefits;" that all secondary agencies — chance, skill, judgment, friends, influence — are but the servants of the great Benefactor, bringing our blessings to us; that they are the bearers of our cup, and not the fillers of it. Therefore the divine injunction, "Beware when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied, *lest thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, and say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.*" "Is it not he that giveth thee power to get wealth?" "Who hath first given to the Lord, and it shall be recompensed to him again? *for of him, and to him, and through him, are all things.*"

3. God gives us food by *his providential blessing* upon our right use of the means he has placed in our hands.

There is a coincidence between the divine methods of nature, providence, and grace. In each of these departments he provides the

means, gives us ability and opportunity to use them, and then crowns our exertions with success. In each department he acts through established laws, and supplies our need through our conformity to them.

One of these is *our own industry*. "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." "Six days shalt thou labor." "He that will not work, neither let him eat." If this law were obeyed, there would be a great deal of fasting throughout our country. He who will not work has no right to pray, "Give me this day my daily bread;" for it is only through his own industry that God has promised it. Verily he hath said, "The idle soul shall suffer hunger, and drowsiness shall cover a man with rags." "Seest thou a man diligent in business? he shall stand before kings." "The hand of the diligent maketh rich, and shall bear rule." "Be not slothful in business." "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." The Bible speaks of "the bread of violence and deceit." It says, "Stolen

waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell." It is God's universal law that "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil, — he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; *bread shall be given him;* his waters shall be sure."

And this divine arrangement is a blessing. Toil is a benefit to the toiler. It benefits him physically, and hedges him in from a thousand temptations. Plenty, without labor, is often a curse. The most fertile countries, where human needs are most bountifully supplied by least exertion, are behind in all the elements of progressive civilization. The most unproductive soils have reared the noblest men and women. Our Father really gives when requiring us to toil for his gift. In fact, he doubles the gift by not only supplying our daily food, but increasing both health and vigor of body and mind in our efforts to secure it.

Our own economy is another of these established laws. Extravagance is a perversion, a wastefulness, an abuse of God's mercies. It is a positive sin. No extravagant person can acceptably pray "the Lord's Prayer."

IV. Some of *the religious lessons* embodied in and taught by this petition.

1. *Daily recognition of our dependence* upon "our Father."

This obvious duty, which all admit, but which we are so prone to neglect, is here associated with our daily food. How appropriate it is, that, when we partake of the gifts of his providence, we should remember the Giver; that, when we partake of his "daily benefits," we should remember our constant Benefactor! Thus a plain duty is made easy from this association. And this duty ought to be a precious privilege, lovingly, gratefully, adoringly performed with each recurrence of his providential supply of our returning bodily wants. Thousands are living in utter neglect of this. Grateful acknowledgment, devout thanks, are never heard at their tables. Like animals of

the forest, which devour nuts without even looking whence they have fallen, such feed on God's mercies, and never look up to him. *Are you living so?* Then this petition is both a rebuke and a lesson to you. Live so no longer. Nay, by praying for your "daily bread," honor Him who crowns your lives with loving kindnesses and tender mercies; daily discharge a duty which will make these very mercies sweeter, richer. Solomon said, "Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts." That is true in man's relation to his fellow-men. It is not true of mankind in their relations to God. Nay, multitudes who live upon his bounty never think of him, never acknowledge his goodness, never utter a word of gratitude to him. Nay, "God is not in all their thoughts." What will such do when they stand before him in judgment?

2. *Moderation in our desires.* We are here taught to pray for our "daily bread," not for a daily feast; for what is needful for our healthy, vigorous physical sustenance, not for luxuries. Most of the diseases which afflict our country are induced by the variety, luxuriousness, and

unhealthiness of our daily food. By these, artificial appetites are generated, disease induced, and human life shortened. Our God would teach us to live simpler, and live better and longer. "Two things have I required of thee," prayed Agur: "deny me not them before I die. Remove me far from vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; *feed me with food convenient for me;* lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." An eminent merchant of New York said to his pastor, "Sir, it has pleased God to give me a large share of this world's goods; *but I have never dared to ask for more than my daily bread.*" "They that *will be rich* fall into temptation and a snare." Wealth gotten by such brings with it habits of self-indulgence, cherishes the pride of life, binds the soul to earthly things, blunts the moral sensibilities so much that our Lord declared that it was "hard" for such to enter into the kingdom of God. It intensifies godlessness, and unfits for the high purposes of true life, both in this world and that which is to

come. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." He who has it can say, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time when their corn and their wine are increased." Finally, this petition rebukes *distrustfulness*, *lack of faith* in the providence of "our Father."

On the one hand, it forbids desiring too much; on the other, it forbids fear of having too little. It is sad that so many of his children nurse anxieties, brood over inordinate thoughts about the future, worry themselves about "what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed" on the "morrow." They trust implicitly for future spiritual good; they rest upon the promises of needed grace in all coming exigencies of their mortal and immortal future; but they fail to exercise an equal faith in regard to future temporal good. Is not this inconsistent? Does it not reflect upon Him who taught us to pray, "Give us *this day* our daily bread"? Will he give the greater, and fail in the less? Will he feed the "birds of the air," and let his children want? Did "he spare not his own Son, but

delivered him up for us all?" and hath he not promised "with him to freely give us all things"? Did he teach us daily to pray for our "daily bread," and will he not answer? Do we not see him looking pityingly down upon us, and saying, "O ye of little faith! wherefore do ye doubt?" He fed Israel in the wilderness day by day.

Believer, distrust, doubt, no more. Believe heartily in, and rely implicitly upon, your heavenly Father's providence. Faithfully conform to his laws of industry and economy, love and serve him, cast your burdens on the Lord, commit your ways to him, and as surely as your Father is on the throne of nature, providence, and grace, so surely shall "*thy bread be given thee*, and thy water be sure;" as surely as necessities come, adequate supplies shall appear.

"The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord *shall not lack any good thing*."

VII.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

"And forgive us our debts."

MATT. vi. 12.

"And forgive us our sins."

LUKE xi. 4.

FORGIVENESS.

"Father in heaven, whose love profound
A ransom for our souls hath found,
Before thy throne we sinners bend:
To us thy pardoning love extend."

IN our study of the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," attention was directed to our physical natures, and God's relation to the supply of their needs. The petition before us now conducts us within the material into the immaterial realm of our souls. In the preceding lecture, we saw something of the dignity, astonishing complications, and wonderful capacities of the body, which make it worthy of Him who formed it, and of his providential care.

But what is a frame, compared with the picture it encloses, or a casket with the gem it holds? What is the physical system, compared

with the spiritual nature created by God in his own image, endowed with the very capacities, in a finite degree, which he possesses infinitely, —the mysterious spirit, which has depths beyond human soundings and faculties, illimitable in their reach ; the spirit which is to survive the wreck of the body, and live during all the eternal years?

Into this soul-realm let us enter. Leaving the outward, passing through the veil of the material, let us solemnly, thoughtfully, and prayerfully enter into the spiritual, out of which our Lord taught should go forth immediately after the petition, "Give," the penitential cry, "Forgive."

St. Cyprian said, "After supply of food, next, pardon for sin is asked for, *that he who is fed of God may live in God.* Thus provision is made not only for the present and passing life, but for the eternal also; whereunto we may come if we receive the pardon of our sins, to which the Lord gave the name of "debts," saying, in the words of the parable, "I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me."

This petition most properly succeeds the fore-

going; for, what if we have all needed physical good, and are left unpardoned, unsaved from sin? Can material welfare minister to the necessities of the soul? What if the body be clothed in purple and fine linen, if the soul is left clad in the filthy garments of unrighteousness? What if the body fare sumptuously every day, if the soul is perishing from spiritual hunger? Nay, beloved, we need forgiveness to put the crown on all providential gifts. The consciousness of a father's displeasure must always mar a child's happiness. Alas! how many desire Him to "give," but never penitently pray him to "forgive."

Three different words in this connection are employed to express substantially the same idea. These are "debts," "trespasses," and "sins." The two former are figurative expressions. The one represents sinners as the subject of undischarged obligations, and sin as delinquency. The other regards us as having gone over the bounds which he marked out for us to live within. "Sin" is the literal name for all violations of law. In praying the Lord's Prayer, I always use this last word, and say,

"Forgive us our *sins*," because it is as scriptural as the other terms. It is more comprehensive than they, since it includes both the idea of debt and trespass, with still wider applications; and, finally, its meaning is simpler, and therefore better understood by all. I shall dwell upon *the subject and the object of this petition.*

I. Its subject is, "Our sins."

What is sin against God? I will not give you my own answer to this question, nor that of church catechisms or creeds, nor the answer of those philosophies which would heal the ills of our souls by medication, similar to that which a physician employs, who uses outward remedies to cure an inward disease. Nay, friends: I give you the answer of the Bible, — the oracle of God. It shall tell us precisely what sin against him is. It says "all unrighteousness is sin;" and that "sin is a transgression of the law." Thus you perceive it teaches that sin is *a condition* of "unrighteousness;" and also *an act*, a "transgression." Expressed in my own language, the Bible teaches that *all*

lack of resemblance to the divine character, and all violations of the divine law are sin.

But *what law* is here referred to? Every thing in the universe, from the minutest to the vastest, is under law adapted to its nature. Our physical systems are under physiological laws, which reach to and control every particle of their fluids, every atom of their solids, and every function of their organs. Likewise our spiritual natures are under spiritual law, which our Lord sententiously expressed, when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This is the divinely adapted and established law over our spirits. Is it not holy, just, and good? Is it not something more than a mere arbitrary enactment? Do not reason, judgment, and conscience, sitting as a supreme court, decide that it is constitutional, arising out of the very organization of our natures, and their necessary relations to God? Do they not affirm it to express our duty? and do we not all feel that with conformity to it, is identified, not merely the divine glory, but our own present and

eternal well-being? Now, *have we obeyed this law?* Understand my question. It is not whether we have been amiable or unamiable, charitable or uncharitable, honest or dishonest, in our relations to our fellow-men. It is not whether we have violated physical, social, or civil law. Nay, it is, *Have we violated, transgressed God's spiritual law*, which requires that we should love him supremely, love him with all our soul, all our mind, all our strength, and love our neighbor as ourselves, and love thus every moment of our conscious, intelligent lives? O friends! what answer do your souls make? Mine replies that I have not done this for a single day in all my life. It makes confession of guilt. My consciousness affirms that I have not been conformed to this righteous law; and that therefore I have been full of "unrighteousness;" that I have perpetually disobeyed its just requirements, and therefore I am a "transgressor," a "sinner."

What do your souls say? Is there one of you who has loved God supremely, and your neighbor as yourself? Nay, not one of you all. "*We have all sinned*, and come short of the

glory of God." We are all hopelessly in debt, because of our failure to render to our Father his due. We are all guilty transgressors, in that we have gone over the bounds set for our desires, affections, and conduct. "If a man say he has no sin, *he deceiveth himself*, and the truth is not in him." If a soul be unconscious of sin, it is because it is "dead in trespasses and sins." "There is not a just man on earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord! for in thy sight shall no man living be justified"

Reflect now, I pray you, upon the following truths concerning "our sins."

1. How great their *number* must be! If we ought to have been righteous, and ought to have loved God supremely all our lives, and have not, then we have been sinful, and have sinned every moment of our responsible existence. Who, then, can compute the number of his sins? Who of us does not understand now what David meant when he exclaimed, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: *they are more than the hairs of my head*, therefore my heart faileth me"?

2. Think of their *essential nature.*

This may be learned from the descriptions given of sin in the Bible. These declare it to be "an evil and a bitter thing, which the Lord abhorreth." They term it "rebellion," "abomination," "robbery," "iniquity," "ungodliness," "filthiness," "disease." Verily, these declare sin to be so evil in character, so antagonistic to God and to our own well-being, that it is the only thing in the universe which he "hates." It separates man from God; and, unless removed, must necessarily make that separation eternal.

Moreover, it is a fearful fact, that in the nature of sin there is self-perpetuating power. Its influence, like the ocean ripple, goes beyond human calculation; but unlike that ripple, which grows fainter and sinks wider as the circle increases, that sin, which was like a mere ripple at first, enlarges until it swells into a wave, rising ever higher and higher, until ultimately it shall dash in black billows on the shores of eternity.

3. Think of the *guilt* of "our sins." The guilt of the violation of any law depends upon

the dignity and importance of the law violated; and inasmuch as God's law over our souls is not only the best, the highest of all laws, but is essential to the very existence of moral government, therefore violations of it are crimsoned with the greatest turpitude. In view of this, who of us does not exclaim, Alas! verily, we are inconceivably guilty sinners. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

4. Remember the *penalty* of sin. Law is made up of two elements, precept and penalty. Both of these are essential to it. Precept without penalty is mere advice. Penalty without precept would be injustice. Both constitute righteous law. We have seen what the precept of God's law is; *what is its penalty?* Both Testaments give the same answer, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "The wages of sin is death." But how can a soul die? Only by being separated, banished from God, the source of spiritual life. And this penalty is not a merely arbitrary or legal enactment; nay, we know that sin naturally produces two effects, — it propels the soul from God, and God

from it. But what can be more fearful than this separation of a soul from the only source of spiritual life and blessedness, from the favor of God, leaving it exposed to his disfavor, and to all the consequences arising out of being left to itself, to the friction of its own faculties, the remorse of its own conscience, the despair of its own prospects? Oh! for a soul thus to be banished and expelled from God into an ever-increasing moral distance from him, there must be the unrelieved blackness of "outer darkness." God is "good and doeth good;" and "his tender mercies are over all his works." But goodness may punish, nay, it must punish badness. A good law urges its penalty against the violator; a good judge executes it; and they do this most certainly, because they are good, and because the interests of all depend upon the execution of righteous laws. Sin, therefore, cannot go unpunished. The very nature of the Being sinned against forbids it. His holy, just, and righteous law, which upholds the moral universe, forbids it. The best interests of all mankind forbid it. Sin must and will be punished. The righteous penalties

of God's law will be executed. He will "by no means clear the guilty." "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment." "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." "The heaven and earth, which now are, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." "These shall go away into everlasting punishment;" "Shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power."

II. The *object* of this petition, "*forgive* us our sins."

In teaching us to pray for *forgiveness*, our divine Lord assumed that of ourselves we could *do nothing towards either compensating for or removing "our sins."* Did he not? If we could have done any thing in those essential directions, would he not have told us what to do, and how to do it? If such were a possibility of human

nature, he knew it better than any one else; and, knowing it, he would have directed our attention to it as our first duty. But, with his thorough knowledge of our condition and capabilities, and with the most yearning interest in our salvation, he urges us to at once *plead guilty, and implore mercy.*

And yet how many there are who persist in trying to do something else with reference to their "sins"! One says, "Well, I know I have not been conformed or obedient to the law of God; but I will make up for it in being very kind, very benevolent, very charitable, very useful, to my fellow-men." Friend, that has been merely your life-long duty towards them: how can such a resolution compensate either for failures in that direction in the past, or for past and present sins against God? How can love for man be a substitute for supreme love to God? Another says, "Well, I know I am a sinner: I have done a great many things I ought not to have done, but hereafter I will live a strictly moral and upright life." Friend, that has been your duty always; but the law requires that you should love God with all your

soul. How can the performance of a lower duty compensate for a life-long failure in performing a higher one? Another says, "I see the wretched fallacy of all talk like that; and I intend hereafter to love God supremely, and not sin against him any more." Friend, suppose you could,—that would be merely your duty with reference to the present and the future, — what is to become of the innumerable sins *of the past?* But, alas! you cannot do as you propose. The depravity and enervation of your spiritual nature render it, if left to yourself, an impossibility. The fact that a prisoner, who is arraigned for a crime, solemnly promises never to commit it again is not allowed in any court as a substitute for the penalty of crime already committed. Another says, "Of course that is all true: I am not so weak as to deceive myself in those ways. I believe that sin ought to be punished, and that I suffer the penalty whenever I do wrong." Friend, *if you are punished for your sins, you need no forgiveness.* You, therefore, can never pray the Lord's Prayer. You need no Saviour: you are your own saviour. You need no mercy, for you endure the penalty. If your view is

right, you need no pardon from God: you are legally justified. "If righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain." If you reach heaven on that basis, you can never join in singing there, "Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, for thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood." Nay, you shall stand solitary and apart, wrapped in the robe of self-righteousness, your only possible utterance being, "Unto *myself* be all the glory, because I endured the penalty of the law against my sins, and am under obligations to no one." Oh! can it be that heaven shall ever hear such a strain? Verily not. Such is not the teaching of Christianity, but in direct opposition to it. Nothing can be plainer than its affirmation that "by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified."

> "Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
> That, in the course of justice, none of us
> Should see salvation."

In the early ages of Christianity, Apollonius, a philosopher of *Tyana*, whom some of that time tried to set up as a rival to the Christian's Christ, in one of his speeches exclaimed, "*O*

ye gods, give me my dues!" But our divine Lord taught his followers to pray, "*Forgive us our sins;*" and herein consists the distinctive difference between the divine and all human systems of morals and religion.

Behold, here, a *mystery*, an *anomaly*, in the government of "our Father who is in heaven." If we violate his natural laws, he never forgives us. We must suffer the prescribed penalty, however painful and distressing it may be. Our ignorance of those laws and their penalties is not admitted as an excuse for their violation. Nay; as surely as the lightning-flash follows the thunder-peal, so surely penal consequences follow all violation of natural laws. And so inevitably settled is this arrangement, that we are not encouraged in the Bible even to pray for deliverance from such penalties; and yet, with regard to our violations of his great spiritual law, we are specifically taught, and warmly encouraged, to pray for their forgiveness. *Why, oh, why! is this?* Why does the holy, just, good God refuse to forgive violations of natural, and yet proffer pardon for sins against the spiritual law? Both are his laws.

Both in their spheres are important; and the spiritual is higher than the natural. Do you answer, He forgives "sins," because "God is love," — he is infinite in mercy? Then, I ask, why does he forgive in the one case, and not in the other? Friends, there is only one solution of this mystery, one answer to this question. That was given by our Lord, when he uttered the immortal words, "*God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life.*" Now, we stand within the radiance of another mystery, anomaly, in the government of our Father! The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, the substitutional suffering of the innocent for the guilty, by means of which God can be just, and yet justify the penitent believer, — that cross, with its amazing mystery of wisdom and love, — that cross, with all its spirit-drawing, heart-melting power, looms up before us. Who of you does not feel like bowing before and adoring the wisdom which devised, the love which prompted, and the power which executed such a wondrous method for satisfying all the claims of vio-

lated law, maintaining the honor of the divine government, and yet securing a basis for the pardon of "our sins"? Briefly this doctrine is thus stated. We are under God's moral government; there can be no government without law; there can be no law without penalty; there can be no sustained law without either the infliction of the penalty on the guilty or on a substitute. That penalty is not inflicted on the penitent believer: it must therefore have been borne by Him "who bore our sins in his own body on the tree." It was "He suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "He was delivered for our offences." "He died for our sins." "The iniquity of us all was laid upon him." "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." He himself said, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed *for the remission of sins.*" Therefore it was, that, upon the very evening following the day upon which our Lord arose from the dead, he told his disciples "that *repent-*

ance and *remission of sins* should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

This is the truth which gives distinctive significance to the Christian system, and is linked with the issues of eternity. Science may report, through Newton, its triumphs in the heavens, laying bare its vast mechanism; through Davy, its wondrous discoveries of the secrets of chemistry; through Humboldt, the wonders of cosmos; and through others, the hidden history of earth, as revealed in geology, and the grand array of principle and facts which it has brought to light concerning matter and mind, society and nations; but the gospel alone reveals how God can be just, and justify a sinner.

Friends, this is *the gospel* of the Son of God, confirmed by miracles, sealed by his blood, affirmed by "our Father," attested by the experience of millions in heaven and on earth. Therefore we read, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness *for the remission* of sins

which are past." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Therefore that pathetic exhortation, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, *even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*" Here, and here only, is hope for the least, and for the most guilty of us all. Here is the basis upon which alone God can forgive "our sins."

Having now expounded the subject and object of this petition, I close this lecture by remarking upon the *prerequisite to the acceptable offering of it.*

We may repeat, we can never pray this petition without an appropriate antecedent exercise. *There must be a realization of "our sins."* This, I hope, is obvious to you all. Not dwelling upon it, therefore, I direct your attention to the fact, that an honest study of the portion of the Lord's Prayer we have already considered is *divinely adapted* to produce such a realization. Briefly, look at this adaptability.

1. We are taught to pray, "Our Father," and thus heartily recognize his fatherhood.

Ask yourself, "Is he my father?" Then I ought always to have recognized, loved, honored, and obeyed him; and I have not done it." Thus you will see how verily guilty you are in failing to do this; that you are "no longer worthy to be called his son;" that you deserve banishment from him.

2. We are taught to pray, "hallowed be thy name;" and thus do reverent homage to the name which heaven adores. Alas! you know that you have utterly failed in this. Some have even dared to profane it. All have failed in hallowing it. In this regard, too, "all have sinned."

3. We are taught to pray, "thy kingdom come;" and yet have we not persisted in shutting our hearts against the incoming of that kingdom? Have we not rebelliously kept self on the throne which belongs to him?

4. We are taught to pray, "thy will be done;" and yet have we not resisted that will all our lives long, both in its direct commands and prohibitions?

Finally, we are taught to pray, "give us this day our daily bread," and thus to recognize

daily dependence upon "our Father's" providence; and yet have we not utterly failed in doing this? Oh! then, are we not all sinners, guilty sinners, penalty-deserving sinners? With these facts before you, can you retain pride, conceit, self-complacency? Does not your heart now cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? Before closing, I wish to ask two questions.

Have you no realization of your "sins"? Then I beseech of you to implore God, by the Spirit, for Jesus' sake, to give it to you. Beg him not to leave you to spiritual blindness, hardness of heart, insensibility of conscience, and obduracy of will. Beg him not to leave you alone, "dead in trespasses and sins." Beg him to break the power of your regnant depravity, and save you from yourself. Unless this is done, *you are forever a lost soul.*

Have you a realization of your "sins"? Then joyfully I exclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the 'sins' of the world!" He is faithful and just to forgive your sins, and cleanse you from all iniquity.

"Flee as a bird to the mountain,
Thou who art weary of sin;
Go to the clear, flowing fountain,
Where you may wash and be clean.
Fly, for the Avenger is nigh thee:
Call, and the Saviour will hear thee;
He on his bosom will bear thee,
O thou who art weary of sin!

He will protect thee forever,
Wipe every falling tear;
He will forsake thee, oh, never,
Sheltered so tenderly there!
Haste, then, the hours are flying;
Spend not thy moments in sighing;
Cease from your sorrow and crying;
The Saviour will wipe every tear."

VIII.

THE LIMIT OF OUR PLEA.

"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

"For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

"But, if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

MATT. vi. 12, 14, 15.

"And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."

LUKE xi. 4. (LEV. xix. 18.)

THE LIMIT OF OUR PLEA.

"Mark well the terms
On which our final absolution rests.
Forgiveness such as that which here on earth
To others we impart, the righteous Judge
Will unto us accord at the dread day
Of universal judgment."

SAMUEL HAYS.

IN our last lecture, we studied the first phrase in the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, and saw that its subject was "our sins," and its object "their forgiveness." The concluding phrase will now engage our attention. We are taught to pray, "Forgive us, *as we forgive others*." Proceed with me to consider, —

The divine limit to our plea for forgiveness.

I. I call your attention to the *general law of limitation*, of which our Lord here makes a specific application.

Every created thing and being is limited in nature, capacity, sphere, duty, and privilege. There is only one in the universe of whom this is not true, and that is "Our Father." He hath no limitations. He is a circle whose centre is nowhere, and whose circumference is everywhere. But, illimitable himself, he hath placed limitations in their very constitutions upon all created objects. Experimentally, we come in contact with these in regard to our bodies, minds, and hearts. We find them defining our necessities, desires, duties, and privileges, not only with respect to our fellow-men, but also to God, his law, and his gospel. We find the principle of limitation in the prayer which our divine Teacher taught us to offer in regard to our bodies, "Give us this day" (not to-morrow), "our daily bread" (not superfluous luxuries). We find the same principle applied to the forgiveness of our sins. We are taught to pray, "forgive us;" not without reference to our feelings towards others, — nay, "*forgive us as we forgive;*" that is, let forgiveness be granted to us, according to the forgiveness we extend to those who have sinned against us. This we are

taught to make the limitation of our prayer; for this, he expressly informs us, our Father will assuredly make the limitation of his answer. Did he not say, "For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but, if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." He also said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged: for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Such is the application of the divine law of limitation to our plea for pardon.

What say you to it? Is it hard, severe, or unjust? Ought we to ask our Father to do that which we will not do ourselves? Ought we to be forgiven, if we will not forgive? Would it not be injurious to us, if we could be pardoned of God for Jesus' sake, and be allowed to retain an unforgiving spirit towards our fellow-men? Who and what are we, that this great boon should be extended to us, while we will not extend it to others! If it could be so, our selfishness would be nourished, and our natures harmed, by the retention of an element

wrong in itself, and hostile to the divine nature. The sins of our fellow-men against us are insignificant, when compared with our sins against God. We saw something in our last lecture of their uncounted number, their crimson guiltiness, and obnoxiousness to the penalty of the holy law; and no one can fail to recognize the fact, that they are infinitely greater than those of others against us. Dare we, then, ask him to forgive the greater, while we refuse to forgive the less? Our fellow-men often may and do plead excuses, palliations, and even justifications, for what they have done against us; but we can never present such pleas before the infinitely righteous God for sins against him.

Then I submit to your reason and conscience, that, as the general law of limitation is just and beneficent, the application of that law to our plea for pardon is eminently right and benevolent. Our minds perceive this; and our spiritual natures feel that it *ought to be so.*

Let us not fail, however, to remember how impressively this truth is elsewhere urged in the gospel, "If thy brother sin against thee, and say, I repent, forgive him. If thy brother tres-

pass against thee seven times a day, and say, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." This amazed the impetuous Peter; and he surlily cried, "Lord, *how oft* shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, — till *seven* times?" That seemed to him incredible and impossible. Calmly, firmly, the adorable Lord not only reaffirmed his statement, but greatly enlarged the duty, by responding, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until *seventy times seven.*" So also in the parable of the servant, to whom the lord freely forgave all his indebtedness, but who immediately went out, and, taking his fellow-servant by the throat, said, "Pay me what thou owest;" and when that fellow-servant did not pay him, because he could not, that forgiven one cast him into prison. Do you remember the terrific words which our Lord represents the master of that servant as saying? They are red hot with indignation and righteous wrath. "O thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had compassion on thee? And his lord was wroth,

and delivered him unto the tormentors till he should pay all that was due. So likewise shall *my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*"

> " Speak not of vengeance! 'tis the right of God.
> ' Vengeance is his.' Who shall usurp the bolt,
> And launch it for Omnipotence? Shall man
> Assume the right of judgment, or prescribe
> How far the line of mercy shall extend,
> Or punishment shall stretch its iron rod?
> In thine own cause to judge, who gave thee right,
> Presumptuous man! "

Here let me notice a difficulty which arises in many minds. One may say, " I can forgive a man who has wronged me, if he will acknowledge the wrong, and profess sorrow for it; but suppose he does neither, — suppose he either ignores the wrong, or justifies himself in doing it, — does the law of limitation apply to that case? Will God's forgiveness of my sins against him be limited by my forgiveness of that man's sin against me? " Friend, I profess to be nothing more than a preacher of Christianity. I

can therefore only present to you what it teaches. We are plainly taught in this petition to pray, "Forgive us, *as* we forgive." Evidently, the forgiveness we are to extend to others is not conditioned upon any feelings or conduct on their part; certainly such is our Lord's teaching. And it is equally plain, that *his* forgiveness of others was not thus conditioned. Go to Calvary, look upon him nailed to the cross between two malefactors! Behold him, jeered at, reviled, taunted most ignominiously by his murderers! Oh! in their stony hearts there is no sorrow for their cruel, cruel conduct; from their bitter lips fall no words of confession; out of their wild, fierce eyes gleams no pitying sympathy for the innocent, harmless, and uncomplaining sufferer: and yet hear him exclaim with his dying breath, while agony thrills along his quivering nerves, "*Father, forgive them: they know not what they do.*"

Assuredly, then, both in his teaching and example, we are taught the duty of cherishing a forgiving spirit even towards those who do not penitently acknowledge their sins against us.

Another person may say, "Well, I'll forgive; but I'll never forget." Most miserable fallacy! Such never forgive at all, but, by cherishing the remembrance of their wrongs, really embalm them. When Frederick the Great lay on his death-bed, M. Rolooff, one of his attendants, said, "There is the forgiveness of your enemies. Your majesty is bound to forgive all men. If you do not do this, how can you ask to be forgiven?" With all his natural implacability, the king had a logical mind. He immediately felt the force of the interrogative argument, and was much troubled. After a moment's pause, he said, "Well, I will do it." Then, turning to the queen, he said, "You, Feekin, may write to your brother, *after I am dead*, and tell him that I forgave him, and died in peace with him." M. Rolooff mildly suggested, "Your majesty should write it at once." Frederick replied sternly, "No, *write after I am dead. That will be safer.*" When our Father forgives, "*he remembers no more forever.*" And Jesus said, "If ye *from your hearts* forgive not, your heavenly Father will not forgive."

There are still others who are conscious of

having done wrong to their fellow-men, and are entirely reckless with regard to it. They neither desire nor would accept forgiveness. What is our duty with regard to them? Simply to be Christlike; and, whether they desire it or not, to cherish and develop a forgiving spirit, — to cultivate that charity which hopeth all things, endureth all things.

> "We do pray for mercy;
> And that same prayer should lead us all
> To render deeds of mercy.
> How shall those hope for mercy, rendering none?"

2. *The experience of Christianity in our hearts disposes and enables us to exercise this Christlike spirit.*

Perhaps the bitterest opponents of the gospel in the present day are German infidels. One of them has called the gentle, patient, forgiving spirit of Christianity "a doglike virtue, — the grace of a beaten hound." Such an utterance could only proceed from heartless, malignant infidelity. Let it not startle you, however; for it is merely an intensified expression of the real spirit of worldliness, in its opposition to godli-

ness; of human depravity, in its opposition to Christianity. Verily, it is the natural utterance of the depraved soul, which denies the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of humanity; which never hallows, but profanes the holy name; is antagonistic to his kingdom; violates perpetually his will; recognizes no relation between Providence and our daily bread; and which, although stricken through with sin, is dead as to all sensibility concerning it, and never implores forgiveness. You ought, therefore, not to be surprised at the contempt which it pours upon this prayer for pardon, and its limitation; or upon the Christian duty of magnanimously from the heart forgiving others their sins against us.

The same spirit you more frequently hear speak on this wise, "I treat others just as they treat me. I will not forgive an injury. I will repay wrong with wrong. I will never forgive even an injustice; and, sooner or later, I will make him suffer who commits it." Many really think such utterances brave, manly, and dignified. Of course it is perfectly natural that such should deem the generous spirit of

forgiveness cowardly and unmanly. Here, then, are two antagonistic dispositions, — the forgiving and the unforgiving. The former is of God, and like God; the other is of sin, and like Satan. One is divine and Christlike; the other, human and devilish. The latter is natural to the depraved soul; the other, foreign to it, — the experimental product of the grace and truth of Christianity. Verily, it is a Christian grace and a Christian duty, which no man will or can perform unless he is a Christian; and no man is a Christian unless he is born again of the Spirit, and has become, through repentance and faith, a "*new creature in Jesus Christ.*" Such an one is both disposed and enabled to forgive others their sins against him.

> "To conquer hate,
> And in its place to cherish love unfeigned,
> Forgiveness and forgetfulness of wrong,
> No precepts but the perfect law of Christ,
> No teacher but the blessed Son of God,
> Could e'er instruct mankind."

Facts demonstrate this. I give you one of very late occurrence, which was communicated by a

highly-respected minister of the gospel. "Some months ago, while in the shop of a member of my church, I met a man who had been colonel of a New-Jersey regiment during the late war. He had been a brave and gallant soldier, and had received dangerous wounds while defending the flag of his country. With much that was noble and generous in his character, he was totally ignorant of experimental religion. In the course of conversation upon general subjects, he remarked, in a strongly-excited manner, *that he could never become a Christian, because he could never be induced to forgive any one who had ever injured him.* I replied, that the forgiving love of God, through Christ, could overcome all such resentful feelings: that naturally, I had the same disposition; but that now, when I felt the rising of anger and revenge, I just thought how much more I had wronged my best, my heavenly Friend, and the feeling of resentment was gone in an instant. We parted, and did not meet again until to-day, when, in the very thoroughfare of business, he hailed me, and, extending both hands, exclaimed, "My dear sir, God bless you! Do you remem-

ber the last conversation we had? Well, God, for Jesus' sake, has forgiven my sins; and now *I am trying to find every one who has ever injured me, that I may tell them that I have forgiven them.*" The minister adds, "What a change! Truly, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things have passed away, and all things become new."

There is nothing distinctively peculiar about this case. Such is the designed and effected result of regenerating grace in every renewed soul. By it we may test both the genuineness of our conversions and the degree in which our natures are under the influence of Christianity. Oh, the grace of God in Christ is adapted to extirpate all bitterness and wrath, all desire for retaliation and revenge, and make us like him, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:" him who said, "love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you;" him whose gospel teaches us "not to render evil for

evil, railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that thereunto ye are called, that ye should inherit the blessing."

III. *The importance of possessing and cultivating this Christly spirit.*

Like every other good element, this needs and must receive attentive cultivation, in order to its growth and development. In the hope of impressing this upon you, —

1. *I recall attention to the truth, that, without its exercise, we cannot be ourselves forgiven of God.*

Bear this in mind. Others may rest satisfied with a hope, based upon intellectual belief, that they shall be saved in eternity. We need to be saved now and here. We need the forgiveness of our sins now and here. Unforgiven sin is a burden upon the spiritually-conscious soul: it is a thick cloud intervening betwixt God and itself; it is a barrier to communion with him, and the experience of spiritual joy. Out of a sense of unforgiven sin arise gloomy doubts and depressing fears, and general distrust. But,

> "If sin be pardoned, I'm secure:
> Death hath no sting beside."

And, with regard to eternity, each of us may adopt the language of an old poet, and say, —

> "Had I a throne above the rest,
> Where angels and archangels dwell,
> One sin unslain within my breast
> Would change that heaven to hell."

Never forget, that, while on the conditions of penitence and faith God has promised to forgive us for Jesus' sake, it is also declared, that, "If we forgive not, our Father will not forgive us." Oh! then, *the unforgiving are unforgiven.* "He shall have judgment without mercy, who showeth no mercy." "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord." "With the merciful, thou wilt show thyself merciful." "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father which is in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses." "If a man say, I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

"A wrong avenged is doubly perpetrated:
Two sinners stand where lately stood but one."

. . . . . .

"Forgiveness to the injured does belong;
But they ne'er pardon who commit the wrong."

2. *Our own enjoyment and usefulness materially depend upon it.*

Its opposite, an unforgiving spirit, is only a form of intensified selfishness, and is an irritant to the soul. It excites disquietude, and energizes our lower natures, and therefore harms, enfeebles, all the Christian virtues. On the contrary, the generous, loving spirit of forgiveness diffuses not only a soothing balm throughout the soul, but invigorates all other virtues, and so brings the peace which passeth understanding. It is therefore kindness to ourselves to forgive others. "Why," asked a heathen philosopher, "should I hurt myself by doing ill to another, because he has hurt himself by doing ill to me?" He who lets the sun go down upon his wrath "makes a hard pillow for his head, and appoints Satan the guardian of his slumbers." Pliny said, "The greatness of the provocation magnifies the clemency."

"The quality of mercy is not strained:
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed:
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown."

Is this true of humanity in general? Oh, then, how gloriously true does it become in reference to every follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, who one day hopes to wear a crown, the brightness of which shall the sun outshine! An unknown writer has said, that "To render evil for good is devil-like; to render evil for evil is beast-like; to render good for good is man-like; but to render good for evil is God-like." Experience has demonstrated, that he who does from the heart render good for evil finds his soul kept in perfect peace. Solomon declared a sublime truth when he wrote, "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression."

Sir Matthew Hale rendered without fee a great service to one who had previously injured him. Being asked how he could use so kindly one who had wronged him so greatly, he replied,

"*I thank God that I have learned to forgive injuries.*" Archbishop Cranmer, who suffered martyrdom in 1556, had cultivated this disposition so highly, that he never revenged an injury, and cheerfully forgave those who planned his death. So habitual was his development of this Christian grace, that it became a common expression in England, "Do my Lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and you make him your friend forever." That eminent French Christian, Desales, said, "That whereas men think it so hard a thing to forgive a wrong, he found it so sweet, that, if the contrary were commanded him, he would have much ado to obey it."

In one of Dryden's essays, he says, "And yet we know that in Christian charity all offences are to be forgiven, as we expect the like pardon for those we daily commit against God. This consideration has often made me tremble when I was saying our Lord's Prayer: *for the plain condition of the forgiveness which* we beg is the pardoning of others the offences which they have done us; for which reason I have many times avoided the commission of that fault, even when I have been notoriously provoked."

3. Moreover, brethren, this Christlike spirit of forgiveness hath *strange, wondrous power.*

Not merely subjective, — that is, within the soul which exercises it, — but objective; that is, upon those towards whom it is exercised. Oh! it hath a power mightier than resentment, mightier than angry words, mightier than retaliatory acts. These arouse opposition, arm others against us, induce them to justify wrongs already committed, and tempt them to commit others. But a forgiving spirit appeals to a man's better nature, disarms, produces conviction, and melts its way into the heart. Verily it hath a strange subduing power, which often produces in those who have sinned against us the very repentance and confession which is all that could be possibly asked of them. I have read somewhere of a soldier in our army who had become dissipated and neglectful of his duties. He was punished again and again, by confinement and other more humiliating methods. Under this treatment he grew harder and harder. At last, a shrewd officer, in command over him, one day sent for him to his tent, and told him how sorry

he was that all previous attempts to rescue him from ruin had failed, and that he knew of only one other method to try, and that was, to freely *forgive* him all the past, in hope that he would amend for the future. The account stated that this *broke the soldier's heart;* and he did become a better man.

> "The fairest action of our human life
> Is scorning to revenge an injury;
> For who forgives without a further strife
> His adversary's heart doth to him tie:
> And 'tis a firmer conquest, truly said,
> To win the heart, than overthrow the head."

This is the reason that we read in the Bible, "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not." "Recompense to no man evil for evil." "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." God hath ordained that

love shall triumph over enmity. But "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners do also even the same. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and your reward shall be great; and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind to the unthankful and the evil."

"'Tis sweet to stammer one letter of
The Eternal's language. On earth
'Tis called forgiveness."

"The narrow soul
Knows not the God-like glory of forgiving;
Nor can the cold, the ruthless heart conceive
How large the power, how fixed the empire is,
Which benefits confer on generous minds:
Goodness prevails upon the stubborn foes,
And conquers more than ever Cæsar's sword did."

Finally, beloved, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, *forgiving*

one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a quarrel against any: even *as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*" "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing."

IX.

LEADING INTO TEMPTATION.

"And lead us not into temptation."

MATT. vi. 13.

TEMPTATION.

"And while in peace abiding,
Within a sheltered home,
We feel that sin and evil
Could never, never come;
But let the strong temptation rise,
As whirlwinds sweep the sea.
We find no strength to 'scape the wreck,
Save, pitying God! in thee."

MRS. HALE.

"Couldst thou boast, O child of weakness!
O'er the sons of wrong and strife,
Were their strong temptations planted
In thy path of life?"

WHITTIER.

WORDS often receive their chief significance from the person who speaks them. The same language, when spoken by different persons, impresses us differently. Suppose the case of two men, each of whom should say to you, "Young man, pray that there may not be war in our country again; that you may never be called to take up arms; never have to go into

battle." Suppose that one of them has never been in war, and that all he knows of its horrors he has learned from others. But suppose that the other man is a veteran, who has had a soldier's experience; has heard the thunder of war's artillery; seen the destructive lightning of its volleys; witnessed the gory horrors of its battlefields; bears on his own person its scars, and can make your eye moisten while he tells you of the brave comrades who fell at his side: when *he* says, "Pray that you may never personally know what war is," those words, coming from him, have an emphatic impressiveness, which they are far from bearing when uttered by the other man.

Friends, it seems to me, that whilst the petition before us has attracted more attention than perhaps any other in the Lord's Prayer, because of its intrinsic relation to our dangers, it becomes clothed with inexpressible interest, when we remember that it came from One who had himself just passed through the fiercest, most terrible, protracted, and exhausting temptations to which any being was ever subjected.

A short time before this utterance, — imme-

diately after his baptism, — our Lord had been *led by the Spirit* along the sandy verge of the Jordan valley, past the Dead Sea, *into the wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.* Travellers tell us that this wilderness is so verdureless, arid, and calcined, that its surface looks like the embers of a ruined world. There, amid inhospitable solitudes, he remained during forty days and nights, suffering extreme exposure and unrelieved hunger. There, as the second Adam, as the divine-human Christ, as the representative of our humanity, he was tempted by the great tempter with substantially all the temptations to which we are exposed. And fresh from that tremendous conflict, wearing its scars, knowing experimentally what temptation is, and what it costs to overcome it, he taught his disciples to pray, "*Lead us not into temptation.*" In this connection of his own experience with the subject of this petition, I find the most pathetic and tender interest added to the petition itself.

I. Let us seek its *true exposition.*

More persons have halted at, stumbled over,

found difficulties in this, than any other sentence of the model prayer. They say, Is it possible that our Father will lead us into temptation, and that, therefore, we must pray against it? Can he possibly become our tempter, ensnarer to sin? I answer, that much of the perplexity concerning Scriptures arises out of not understanding that many words therein have double meanings; whereas, we are accustomed to attach to them a single one. This is true of the words "tempt" and "temptation." Many associate with this verb and noun merely the idea of enticing to evil, alluring to sin. Therefore it seems very mysterious to them that we should be taught to pray that *our Father* would not thus entice and allure us. But this word has another meaning. Very often, in the Bible, to tempt means to try, to test, to put to proof. Thus God tempted Adam, Abraham, and other ancient worthies. He said to Israel, "*I have led thee forty years in the wilderness, to prove thee, to humble thee, and to see what was in thy heart.*" Thus our Lord was tempted in the wilderness. Thus he himself said to others, "*Because thou hast kept the word of my patience,*

I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that are on the earth. Thus an apostle speaks of "*Fiery trials which are to try you.*" "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; *for, when he is tried*, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Now, a true exposition of this petition reveals not only the double meaning of this word *temptation*, but reveals the fact, however perplexing and mysterious it may be, that God is related to it and to us, in both of those senses. Some, in order to escape this difficulty, drop the word "*Lead*," and substitute the word "Leave;" and make the petition read, "Leave us not in temptation." The Greek verb of which *lead* is the translation will by no possibility allow of this. Nay, we must acknowledge the fact, that this petition assumes and teaches that our Father is related to our temptations, both in the sense of trials, tests of character, and of enticements, allurements to sin. Suffice it just here to say, that he is related to the former *directly*, and to the latter *indirectly*, both of which positions I hope to sustain in this lecture.

II. *He is related directly to our temptations, in the sense of trials, tests, proofs of character.*

It is a fact, of which we are all conscious, that we are led into circumstances where our characters are tried, put to the test; and what is fundamentally in us is brought out. Our whole existence is clearly one of probation: probation involves trials; and *these* imply intermingled good and evil. Bishop Butler truly affirms, that "A state of probation implies trial, difficulties, and danger." Responsibility, which we all feel, implies law; and law implies the possibility of disobedience; and the possibility of disobedience implies a will, subject to be influenced by opposite motives: and herein is both the capability and possibility of either vice or virtue. Now, to determine the character of our goodness, it must be put on trial; and, to be put on trial, we must be "led into temptation." For Achan to steal, for Cain to slay, for Gehazi to take bribes, they must have opportunities. Of Hezekiah we read, that, "in the business of the ambassadors, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." If you were never in circumstances where your virtue

was tested, you might remain innocent, simply from lack of opportunity to become guilty; but there would, in such case, be no virtue in your innocence. Development is God's universal law, — development both of good and evil; and therefore he providentially leads us where we have opportunities for either. This is not only a fact of our consciousness, but a clear revelation of the Bible. It is full of illustrations of such leadings of God's providence, both of individuals and nations. These are so familiar, that I need not specify or dwell upon them. By providential arrangement, he makes our *conditions* in life serve this purpose. Some are thus tested by vigorous health of body, others by sickness; some by wealth, others by poverty. Agur understood this when he prayed, "*Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*" Some are thus tried by popularity; others by neglect and reproach. Some by tests addressed to their physical appetites; others by appeals to their æsthetic natures.

Some by positions of trust and responsibility to which they are elevated; others by the lowliness of the spheres in which they are left to move. Some by publicity, and others by privacy. Some by the greatness of their privileges; others by deprivations of them: and all are tested by opportunities of good and of evil. Moreover, the *changes* through which we pass, by divine arrangement, subject us to new tests. Nero, when young, was a beloved and honored pupil of Seneca. He neither knew himself, nor did others know what was in him; but, when he became emperor of Rome, the latent devil within him burst forth into full diabolical proportions. Mary, Queen of England, when a girl, was kind and affectionate; but, on the throne, she showed herself worthy of the awful historical title of "Bloody Mary." Robespierre, when a young man, resigned an office rather than condemn a culprit; but, when he had full opportunities, he made the best blood of Paris flow in streams from the horrid guillotine. A mere change of place and associations will sometimes prove to be the occasion of such developments of character; as, when a young man unblemished in

reputation at his country home, falls into the snares of city life, and astonishes even himself by his capability for wickedness.

Revolution in public affairs, monetary crises, how they reveal hidden character! Facts seem to give some ground for the sneer of Aaron Burr at humanity, when he said that, "No moral agent since the world began ever prevailed over twenty-five per cent profit." Now, when our Lord taught us to pray, *lead us not into temptation*, in the sense we have just considered, we are not to understand that he taught us to deprecate these tests of our characters, but to pray that we might not be led into *trials which might prove too great for our debilitated natures*, "that he would not conduct us into such intolerable and overmastering temptations as shall sweep our faith from its foothold, hurl us from our steadfastness, and whelm us in despair and perdition;" and this seems made clear by the other branch of our petition, which asks deliverance from evil. In proof of this, I call your attention to the fact, that the Greek noun here rendered temptation comes from a verb which means to *pierce through*, as with a spear. *Temptation*

therefore means not only a trial, but a sore transfixing, which might be greater than we are able to bear. So many of the primitive fathers understood this petition; and therefore, in explaining it, they added, *quam ferre non possumus*, — "which we are not able to bear." Therefore, whilst we are not to shrink from tests by which our integrity is put to the proof, it is our privilege and duty to pray, "O Father! lead us not into circumstances which shall constitute trials, — temptations beyond our poor strength to endure." To this, direct reference seems to be made in the precious assurance, "There is no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, *who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;* but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Our Father's design in this is twofold.

1. To *confirm what is good in us.* It does not hurt gold to be tried, — tested, put to proof; nay, it is only purified by such processes. The very trial which would consume baser metals only consumes its dross. Even so genuine virtue is not harmed by circumstances which

cest its integrity; nay, it will grow stronger under them. Genuine honor, honesty, love, patriotism, piety, — those golden elements of character, — are developed and strengthened by trials, before which dishonor, dishonesty, hatred, disloyalty, and impiety are disastrously overthrown. A Charleston banker, who had lost all his property during the late war, subsequently said, "I am glad for the loss of my fortune. My sons were growing up in idleness, leaning on my wealth, and would perhaps have become worthless. Now they feel the necessity of exertion, both for my sake and their own; and I have more pleasure in their present dutifulness and industry than I had in all my former wealth." Rev. Dr. Chapin said, "I would not give much for that virtue which has never been tried and tested. I would not give much for that virtue whose errant shield is burnished and beautiful. Give me the virtue whose battered and bruised shield has arrayed itself in conflict against the hosts of evil. Give me the dented and tarnished armor that has come out of the thick care and strife of life. Give me the man who has been baptized in the fire of temptation, and come out like refined gold."

To this Job referred, when he said, "*But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*" And David, when he exclaimed, "*For thou, O God! hast proved us; thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and water; thou broughtest us into the net: thou laidest affliction upon our loins: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.*" So also the apostle Peter, when he wrote to "the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father:" "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." To this gracious design the apostle James referred, when he wrote, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience: but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." "Before I was afflicted," David

sang, "I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." Thus, "out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong comes forth sweetness."

2. The other design is, *by revealing to ourselves the evil that is in us, to teach us our need of him and his assisting grace.*

O friends! our Father purposes only good to us in all his arrangements; but, from the circumstances of the case, he must adapt his methods to our conditions. So blind are we to our own weakness, so conceited by false views of our own strength, that we are prone to refuse all the proffers of his grace, and rely upon our own wisdom and power, or upon favorable circumstances around us. Therefore he leads us into exigencies, sends upon us afflictive dispensations, causes us to pass through severe trials, in which we find that our own wisdom is sheer folly, our strength mere weakness: we find our plans all thwarted, our expectations blasted, and that we are utterly insufficient of ourselves. Thus he graciously opens our blind eyes, unstops our deaf ears, melts our hard hearts, and makes

us conscious of our need of wisdom wiser than our own; of strength stronger than our own; of a controlling will more powerful than our own; of aid, which neither positions nor possessions can afford, and which can come only from himself. And this gracious design is accomplished, when, by these processes, this experimental result is reached, and one out of the depths cries, "O my Father! I am not sufficient of myself to control myself, nor to cope with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah!
Pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but thou art mighty:
Hold me with thy powerful hand.

Open thou the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing waters flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield."

III. It remains for us *to consider God's relation to our temptations in the sense of enticements, allurements, to sin.*

Of the fact of some such relation, there is no doubt. The fact that such relation is not direct and causal is most certain; for we read, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." This relation, therefore, must be *indirect* and *permissive*. In Hebraistic expression, God is said *to do a thing, which he only permits or suffers to be done*. That he does suffer, permit, us to be led into temptation is a conscious fact. But see you not that this is a necessity, that it could not be otherwise, unless he either controlled us by mere omnipotence, which would destroy our responsible agency, or remove us out of a state of probation? He does neither of these, but places before us good and evil; offers us help to do the former, and to shun the latter; and then suffers, permits, us to act as we will, and bring upon ourselves the legitimate consequences of our own character and conduct. Thus under-

stood, our petition means, *let us not be led into temptation.*

1. We shall be deeply impressed with the importance of offering this petition, thus viewed, when we remember *how much there is within us*, which, unrestrained, leads us into temptation. Analyze the ordinary process of temptation. It commences with simply an evil thought; then the imagination is excited, which invests the object of the thought with impressive interest; next follows the consent of the will, and finally the act is performed, — the sin committed. He who knows his own seal best knows that the Bible speaks truth, when it says, that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Emphatically is this true of the unregenerate heart; and regenerated men are but "brands plucked from the burning, all charred with the fires through which they have passed, and readily rekindling at the contact of the casual spark." A good man may exclaim, "*I hate vain thoughts;*" but they will arise within him. All of us have our besetting sins, our tendencies to evil; and these go with us where we go, stay with us where we stay. Hence the

elements of our worst dangers are within ourselves. Therefore we read, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he who taketh a city." If left to himself, no man can tell what "earthly, sensual, devilish" thing he may not do. St. Bernard truly said, "We are beaten with our own staff, and bound in our own girdle." Verily a blinded understanding, a faithless conscience, a treacherous memory, perverted judgment, polluted imagination, a debilitated will, a narrow experience, a spirit of self-dependence, — all these, associated with a deceitful heart, are ready evermore to lead us into temptation. This depravity sometimes makes God's best gifts occasions for sin. Such is its dire alchemy, that oftentimes the fond love of a mother, the liberality of a father, becomes the occasion of the ruin of their sons and daughters. Friendship, kindred, money, amusements, knowledge, honor, and power may all ensnare us; even our Bibles, sabbaths, and religious privileges may be so used as to become aggravations of our guilt. Yea, the gospel of our salvation may be made the occasion of our increased condemnation; and

the loving Christ, who now extends arms of mercy towards us, may become the condemning Judge, when he sits on the great white throne.

2. Remember how much there is *outside of us*, ready to lead us into temptation.

Think of the great spirit of evil, who "goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,"—the great tempter of God and man. Subtle, inveterate, practised, and untiring; "flitting restlessly, in sight of a lost and hated heaven, around our sin-defiled earth, his hate unsated, he maliciously, unweariedly, powerfully, cunningly, tempts men to sin." Oh, his wiles, devices, depths, fiery darts! How great is his knowledge of our weaknesses, and of the means to work upon them; and, alas! worst of all, how many allies he has within our own natures! Then think how full social, business, and political life is of temptation! It was published in our newspapers, as a fact, that, since its establishment, there have been applications for admission to one of our State inebriate asylums of thirty-nine ministers, eight judges, forty merchants, two hundred and twenty-six physicians, two hundred and forty gentlemen, and

thirteen hundred women. Young men feel strong in their power to resist temptation, and often laugh and make merry at the fears of their friends, who admonish them of the danger of entering upon any course of vicious indulgence. But the wise man has said, "He that trusteth his own heart is a fool;" and daily examples of the fatal fall and ruin of those who were confident of their own strength ought to warn every one to guard against personal danger. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The following illustration from "The American Messenger" is in point: "A young man stood gazing listlessly at the windows of a pleasantly-lighted room, one evening, when he felt a gentle tap on the shoulder: he turned; and a friend of his, taking his arm, said, 'Come, I'm going in here a few moments; will you not come?' He hesitated; his mother rose before him, as on her dying bed he promised her that he would never, never, never sit at a gambling-table, or look up on the wine-cup. But the tempter still urged: the first downward step was taken. He entered.

"A few years passed away. Stretched on a

bed is a poor, bloated, dying man, with frenzied eyes and writhing limbs. It is not necessary to follow him in the downward course of sin and misery. He had lost nearly all; and he drank that he might still the accusings of conscience: he drank until he was struck with delirium tremens. He would point his attenuated finger towards the door, and exclaim, 'There they are: don't you see them? Oh, keep them off, keep them off! There, they have got me! Yes, yes, I will play one more game with you; for you have my soul, I know you have. I will win it back.' Thus he would rave, ever thinking he was playing with demons, that he might win back his soul, which he said they had got, until death palsied his arm, and chilled his blood; when the strife was ended, and the gambler-drunkard was no more."

Everywhere there are beings who call themselves men, who tempt others to disbelieve in God, throw away the Bible, violate the sabbath, to gamble, swear, lie, steal, and become licentious. There are beings, in the form of men, who tempt and seduce women; yea, O God! even girls, to hopeless ruin, and then glory in their

hellish triumphs. And worse than all, more horrible than all, there are beings, in the form of women, who tempt men to their everlasting overthrow. And what innumerable multitudes throughout the whole world fall before these malign influences!

Having now shown you God's relation to our temptations to be both *direct and indirect*, *causal and permissive*, the question arises, "What will we do with regard to it?" How solemn the thought, that all of us will either be overcome by, or will overcome temptation! I think of a little child, and exclaim, —

"Oh, thou bright thing,
Fresh from the hand of God!
The motions of thy dancing limbs
Are swayed by the unceasing
Music of thy being.
Nearer I deem the Lord
While gazing on thee.
'Tis ages since he made
His youngest star:
His hands were on thee
As of yesterday, thou later
Revelation, breaking with laughter
From the fount,
Whence all things flow.

O bright and singing child!
What wilt thou be hereafter?"

Young men and maidens, what will ye be hereafter? Shall ye be conquerors, or conquered by inevitable temptations? I close this lecture by assuring you that safety is found only, —

1. In *conscious realization of your danger.* "He that trusteth to his own heart is a fool;" to his own wisdom, shall find it folly; to his own strength, shall find it weakness; to his own resolutions, shall find them swept away; to his circumstances, shall find in them all temptations. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Awake to a realization of this, and cry to yourself, —

"My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise:
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies."

2. *Daily pray this petition as you never have before.* You understand it now in both of its relations. And what encouragement you have to offer it! "We have not an High Priest who

cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able also to succor them that are tempted." "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will, with the temptation, make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished."

3. *Keep out of the way of temptation as much as possible.* How many merely repeat this petition, and then go, unnecessarily, voluntarily, into temptation! Do you go where it is weakest, and where pure influences are strongest! Both watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; for, however willing the spirit may be, the flesh is weak. "Be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour." "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil." "Stand therefore, having your loins

girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; *praying always with all prayer*, and supplication in the Spirit, and *watching thereunto with all perseverance*."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy, — to the only wise God, our Saviour, — be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."

X.

DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL.

"But deliver us from evil."

MATT. vi. 13.

DELIVERANCE.

"All the ills of childhood, maturity, and age, each bead of sweat rolling from the brow of toil, each tear that falls from the eye, and each sigh that quits the burdened heart, every pang felt, and every complaint uttered, but waft to God, or send around to our fellow-men, *the one sad, monotonous cry, 'Deliver us from evil.'*"

Rev. Dr. WILLIAMS.

THE Lord's Prayer is an epitome of Christian exercises, privileges, and duties. The first effect of a genuine Christian experience is, to reproduce in us the spirit and feelings of children towards God; which recognizes fatherhood in him, and brotherhood in all mankind, and then spontaneously utters the petitions concerning his name, his kingdom, and his will. This is the natural outflow of the regenerate soul, the loving gush of its supernatural unselfishness towards its divine, all-glorious Father. That accomplished, we are allowed and taught

to regard him in specific relations to ourselves, our physical necessities and our spiritual necessities. But these, you perceive, reach only the present. A future is before us, — a future all unknown, full of spiritual dangers, whose coast-line is strewn with wrecks; and, with reference to that, we are permitted and taught to pray, "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." The chief evidence that our past sins are forgiven is found in the fact, that we are not satisfied with pardon for the past, but desire safety from sin in the future; and, when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," and understand what great purposes of love our Father proposes by means of it, then we cry, "Deliver us from evil!" Augustine wrote, "When we say 'Deliver us from evil,' then we are reminded that we have not yet attained the region of that blessedness where no evil shall be suffered any more. And this last thought with which the Lord's Prayer is summed up is so comprehensive, so sufficient for every state of trouble, that, be the Christian in what trial he may, this final deliverance forms the ultimate object of his groanings. The

longing for this brings out his warmest tears; with aspirations towards this, he begins his supplications; on the hope of this, he lingers through their course; and, with his whole soul fixed on this, he brings them to a close."

I. *What is that from which we are here taught to pray for deliverance?*

"Evil." But what is that? Any thing is evil in which bad qualities inhere, and which produces bad effects. Physical evil is exactly this, in its relation to our material natures; and soul-evil is this, in its relation to our spiritual natures. You ought to know, that, in the original Greek, there is a particle before the word translated "evil:" so that the prayer reads, deliver us from "the evil;" and because, in Matthew's Gospel, Satan is called "the evil one," therefore many suppose that the reference here is to him. I do not. Observe the connection, "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from the 'evil.'" The evil of what? Obviously, that which results from, either not receiving the benefit which God designs temptation, in the sense of mere trial, shall bring us,

or that which results from our yielding to temptation, in the sense of inducement to sin. There is no evil in simply being tempted: nay, good accrues to us when we overcome it; evil only when we are overcome by it. Evil is the opposite of good; which, in its highest sense, includes two elements, — a *condition of our natures*, such as is indicated by the words purity, holiness, and goodness; and *an experience* of our souls, which we call happiness, and express by many similar words. "The man of the world looks to himself, and calls those things evil which are displeasing to himself. The Christian looks to God, and calls those things evil which are displeasing to him."

In like manner, considered as the opposite of "good," "evil" also involves two distinct but related elements, — a condition which is *sinfulness*, and an experience which is *misery*. O friends! sinfulness and wretchedness are related, not merely as antecedent and consequent, but as cause and effect. Such is the constitution of the human soul, and such is the administration of the moral government of God, that, where there is sinfulness, *there must be* wretchedness.

Our Lord intended, in this petition, to include both of these elements. He meant to teach us to pray for deliverance from the guilt of compliance with temptations, and the inconceivable train of evil consequences which are connected with it. So he himself prayed for his disciples, when, in his memorable prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, he said, "I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from *the evil*." This also is referred to by Paul, in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, when he says, "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from *evil*."

This interpretation is confirmed by a reference to the Greek word, here rendered "deliver." It means to "break chains, loose bands, snatch, pluck away." With this before us, you perceive that our petition prays, that God would "break" the chains of guilt and misery, "loose" the bands of sin and sorrow, and "pluck" us out of the temporal and eternal dangers to which guilt exposes us.

II. *The importance of prayer for such deliver-*

ance. 1. Because this is the only *essential evil* to which we are exposed.

The world is full of real and imaginary evils. Diseases of the body, loss of friends, business adversities, and calamitous circumstances are evils. Ignorance, sensuality, pride, hatred, revenge, covetousness, and all inordinate passions, are evils. Man's inhumanity to man, civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, and all the vices which stalk with iron feet over bleeding hearts, are lamentable evils. Sickness and poverty, pain and death, as well as the consuming flame, the desolating flood, grim famine, and the withering thunder-bolt, are tremendous evils. The Bible represents the whole creation as groaning and travailing in pain together on account of them. But I tell you that all these are only branches from one root, only streams from one fountain, only effects of one cause; and that this root, fountain, cause, is sin against God, with its innumerable ramifications and developments.

Rev. Dr. Isaac Barrow thus powerfully exhibits this great truth: "As for such evils as these, the want of things necessary or convenient for us; bodily disease and pain;

disappointment in our designs, and ill success in our undertakings; disgrace and reproach upon our good names; dangers, difficulties, and distresses, concerning our outward estate; distractions, vexations, and troubles of mind about temporal matters, — with the like evils (in some sense, in some degree, evils, or appearing such to our natural sense and fancy), we may, indeed, deprecate them, as even our Lord himself, with submission, did, to the wisdom and will of God, in case it pleaseth him, and he thinketh fit to remove them. *But all these things are but names and empty sounds in comparison to spiritual and eternal* evils, — such as are vicious distempers of mind; indispositions to serve God; ill progress in our spiritual affairs; dissatisfaction concerning our state in respect to God; actual transgression of God's holy will and law; incurring God's displeasure and disfavor; being deprived of his grace and assistance; wanting the communion and comfort of his Holy Spirit; remorse of conscience and anguish of spirit for having violated or neglected our duty; blindness of mind; hardness of heart; want of love, reverence, and devotion towards God, of charity

and good-will towards our neighbor, and of sobriety, humility, regularity of passion, and calmness of temper, in respect to ourselves and the inward frame of our souls: with respect to these and such like evils, we should absolutely request of God, that he, in mercy, would deliver and free us from them, they being irreconcilably contrary to his will and glory, and inconsistent with our eternal welfare."

If you analyze this extended specification of evil, you will discover that the root, fountain, cause, of all *is sin;* and that, therefore, it is the evil of evils, — the only essential evil in the world.

Now, I know, as well as you do, that men generally do not believe this. They either deny it theoretically, or ignore it practically. They locate evil outside of themselves, as inhering in disastrous circumstances. In illustration of this, I give you a fact. "Do you see that man walking yonder?" said one friend to another, while passing down a street. "He is a ruined man, sir." What think you had befallen that person? His health was perfect. He had experienced no great domestic sorrow. He had

committed no crime. His integrity had not been impeached; and his character was unexceptionable: and yet he was pronounced a "ruined man." "Ruin" is a fearful word. At its mention, the imagination conjures up dismal scenes. Any ruined object is a lamentable sight. But, when we think of a *ruined man*, the vision is more terrible than our conceptions can grasp. Why, think you, the person referred to was pronounced ruined? Simply because, by means of circumstances over which he had no control, and for which he was not responsible, he had lost his property, and been reduced from competency to poverty. True, his health of body, his character for integrity, his ability to work, friends to love him, and God to help him, all remained; but, in commercial nomenclature, he was pronounced "*ruined.*" Oh, how superficial is the world's thinking! how unjust its judgments! how delusive its views! how short-sighted its penetration! Nay, friends, all essential evil is within ourselves; it is *sin:* that is the only fundamental evil, and the prolific source of all that harms body or soul, in time or eternity.

This is indirectly proven *by reason*, which, in its last analysis, finds that all which the world calls evil are simply effects; for which there must be a back-lying, adequate, everywhere-operating cause.

This is directly proven by *the Bible;* which shows that those evils were not in our world until sin entered, and gives us the testimony of God himself, who affirms that sin is the only radical "*evil, and bitter thing which he hates,*" not merely because of its intrinsic wrongfulness and hideousness, but because it is the originating cause of the alienation of humanity from himself, and all the temporal and eternal woes to which it is obnoxious. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for he cannot be tempted of evil, and tempteth no man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed; and lust, when it hath conceived, *bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*"

> "What havoc hast thou made, foul monster, Sin!
> Greatest and first of ills! The fruitful parent
> Of woes of all dimensions! But for thee,
> Sorrow had never been!"

2. We ought to offer this petition, because *we cannot deliver ourselves.*

If we could, there would be no propriety in prayer; for God never does any thing for us which we can do for ourselves. What saith the word? "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith Jehovah. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be." "So, then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." "His own iniquity shall take the wicked himself, and he *shall be holden with the cords of his sins.*"

How the world has struggled to deliver itself from what it regarded as evil! How it has

striven to escape sorrow, and secure happiness! How it has toiled to rear impassible intrenchments against the entrance of armed ills! Men have travelled; but care has gone with them in all their journeyings. The great Roman said, "One twinge of tooth-ache makes me forget that I am Cæsar." They have selected choice spots in which to rest; but anxieties and solicitudes have accompanied them. They have aimed at, and reached high positions; but they have found that storms were there, as well as sunshine. They have sought refuge from trouble in the flowing bowl; but they could not stupefy conscience. They have purchased pleasures at enormous prices, and discovered, at last, that they had bought weariness and remorse. They have enslaved their bodies and pauperized their spirits for gold; but they have been horrified when God said, "Go to, now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Byron

wrote not only his own experience, but that of thousands of others, in these lines: —

"Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel a while the sense of ill;
Though pleasure fill the maddening soul,
The heart, the heart, is lonely still.
Ay, but to die, and go, alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go;
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe;

Count o'er the joys these hours have seen,
Count o'er the days from anguish free;
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.
Nay, for myself, so dark my fate
Through every line of life hath been,
Man and the world so much I hate,
I care not when I quit the scene."

Others have tried to remove moral evil by the endurance of physical ills. They have tortured their bodies in every conceivable way to remove sin from their souls, but all in vain. Internal causes cannot be removed by external appliances.

> "Trust me: no torture which the poets feign
> Can match the fierce, unutterable pain
> He feels who, night and day, devoid of rest,
> Carries his own accuser in his breast."

"Earthly reformers have busied themselves about outer circumstances, to the neglect of inner character. They have hoped to cure the dropsied limb by the application, externally, of the bandage and compress. They have prescribed for the inner aneurism of the heart the mere skin-deep lotion of social ameliorations and outward decencies. They have found the Upas-tree of human depravity radiating death over a wide circuit, and shooting its roots and filaments into all the laws and lore and usages, the joys and toils and scenes, of earth, and dropping poison on all beneath its shade; and these heedless and sanguine philanthropists have said, 'It needs more compost in the soil, and a neater and taller fence. Whitewash its trunk, and top its boughs, and tie upon it a few grafts of philosophy and almsgiving, and order, and all will be well.' But divine reason spoke out, by the lips of our Lord, in his sermon on the mount, "Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good."

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

It is true that there are many personal, social, and governmental evils which men produce, and which they can and ought to eradicate. They are verily guilty for not doing so immediately. But when we come to sinfulness within our own natures, which develops itself in an evil heart, an evil conscience, an evil imagination, evil passions, perverted reason, darkened understanding, and a rebellious will, all of which are in affinity with an evil world and Satan, — these we find a power stronger than ourselves. We find in combating with it, that our strength is weakness, our wisdom is folly, our efforts towards self-deliverance futile. Then our souls feel the need humanity has ever felt; and our voices join in its sad, monotonous cry, "Deliver us from evil." This has been the experience of those whom we regard as the best of men. David exclaimed, "Mine iniquities are gone over my head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long; I am feeble

and sore broken." Paul, the great apostle, in giving us an account of his inner life, says, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the *evil which I would not*, that I do. I find, then, a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me: for I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Whilst, therefore, humanitarianism and all other sceptical systems of philosophy aim at deliverance from evil by educating the mind, freeing it from superstition, and by force of will and outward changes of conditions and circumstances, Christianity affirms, that there is no delivering power from radical evil within a depraved soul, or in any possible surroundings! nay, it says to poor, lost, enervated humanity, Look out of thyself, above all thy conditions,

and penitently cry to thy Father, God, "Deliver us from evil."

III. *Encouragements* to offer this petition.

These are many and glorious. I direct attention to a few of the more prominent.

1. The fact that *he* taught us thus to pray. The most eminent lawyer may give wrong legal advice. The most eminent physician may make a wrong medical prescription. The wisest teacher may give incorrect instruction. The greatest general may issue a wrong order in the very heat of battle. To err is human. But our Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man, the celestial-terrestrial, the infinite-finite, who thoroughly knows our nature and all of its capabilities and possibilities, and who is perfectly cognizant of all the evil within and without us, and who feels the profoundest, most loving solicitude in our welfare, says no word about delivering ourselves, or about delivering circumstances, but teaches us to look up to God, and cry, "Deliver us from evil." He is too wise to err. He embodied the wisdom of God. Do you not, then, perceive what immense encouragement is found

in the fact, that he taught us thus to pray? Do you wonder that his followers love to sing,

"Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free:
From our *fears and sins release* us;
Let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the saints thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart"?

And what he taught by teaching us to offer this petition is found developed in other forms throughout his entire gospel. Glorious assurance! "We have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*"

Dr. Williams has eloquently said, "He not only shaped this prayer, but sustains its every petition, buttressing the summit of the ladder on the throne of his original and equal godhead, and bracing the foot of that ladder against the

cradle, the cross, and the tomb of his incarnation."

2. The *willingness and ability* of our Father to deliver us.

Earthly parents would gladly deliver their children from all evil, if they could; but, however willing to do so, they have not the ability. "Our Father" is both infinitely willing and able. He is both love and almightiness, manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is stronger than the strong man of our depravity; stronger than Satan, with all his infernal cunning; stronger than evil, in its most tremendous forms. Seventy times in the Bible he is called the "Almighty." His hand is called "the mighty hand of God." We read of "the thunder of his power;" that "he weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." Heaven's grandest anthem, in which the earth is yet to join, is, "Allelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." O blessed assurance! He is mighty to save, strong to deliver; and he says, "Call on me in the day of trouble; and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." What inexpressible encouragement to the most discouraged is found

in this truth! Friend, have you almost given up in despair? Are you weary with struggles against evil, and hopeless of escape from it? Take courage in view of this truth. Penitentially and believingly lay hold upon divine omnipotence, and you shall be amazed at its efficiency. Verily, through its power you shall come off conqueror, yea, more than conqueror, and shout with joy full of glory, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I repeat, that *permanent*, delivering power is found nowhere else. In the fourth volume of the history of "The United-States Exploring Expedition," we are told, that in the Columbia River, which empties into the Pacific, there is a place where the waters are compressed into a narrow channel; and the whole volume falls many feet down descending rocks. This passage is very dangerous, but is often made with safety in a small boat. Below it, however, is a far greater danger. The water is comparatively smooth, and indicates no treachery; but the explorers say, that the boat which has safely passed the preceding danger, and whose occupants may be rejoi-

cing in their escape, when it reaches a certain point, begins to move in a circular course. Swifter and swifter it thus revolves, until no effort from within can take it out of that dreadful current. Round and round it whirls, until, having reached a fatal centre, it shoots downward; and they tell us, that rarely afterwards is even a fragment of the fated boat discovered. Thus it often proves in human life. After persons have passed through one class of perils, and reached positions where they thought themselves safe, temptations in new forms, arising out of new circumstances, assail them, and, alas! they are ruined. Brilliancy of intellect, wealth of acquisition, previous experiences, honest resolutions, have all failed in the hour of direct emergency. *The grace of God through Jesus Christ has never failed.* He saith to us,

"Fear not, I am with thee: oh, be not dismayed!
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid:
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy trials to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply.
The flame shall not hurt thee: I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes:
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, — no, never, — no, never forsake!"

Finally, great encouragement is found in the fact, that he has *delivered so many in the past, and is delivering so many now.* Recall some of the testimonies of ancient witnesses. One of them said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me." Another, "The Lord heard, and delivered me from all my fears." Of Israel, Moses said, "The Lord delivered them." David said, "Thou art my help, and my deliverer." The New Testament abounds with the records of delivering grace; and heaven is filled with monuments of its power. Sweetly Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation,

but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Although Satan, "as a roaring lion," still "goeth about seeking whom he may devour," the "lion of the tribe of Judah" is everywhere delivering from that cruel adversary. The promise is being fulfilled, which says, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Observe, it says not that *we* shall bruise Satan under our feet, but that God shall do it. Oh, then, be encouraged to strive and pray for deliverance from evil! and you shall be delivered. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ." "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved. He that keepeth thee will not slumber. The Lord Jehovah will be thy keeper, thy shade upon thy right hand." "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler." "There shall no evil befall thee; for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." "He shall preserve thy soul; yea, the Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and forevermore." Verily, thou shalt confidently exclaim, with Paul,

"The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work." Verily, when thou passest through the valley of dark shadows, thou shalt calmly say, "I fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." And, in the glorious beyond, thy radiant feet shall stand on the eternal mount of deliverance; and thy voice shall join the multitudinous host of those who sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us priests and kings unto God and his Father, — to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

XI.

ARGUMENT OF THE PRAYER.

"For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen."

MATT. vi. 13.

THE ARGUMENT.

"Unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, — unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

WE have now reached the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer; and I confess to an experience of something like regret on account of it. These studies have been as thorough as attention to other duties has permitted and my abilities have allowed. To me they have been so profitable and delightful, that I regret their termination. In preparing these lectures, I have seemed to myself like one ascending a lofty mountain, who finds at each advancing step broader and grander sweeps of view, new and varied objects of interest, and who is so engrossed with the scenery, that, when he reaches

the summit, and stands with nothing between him and the heaven which seems so near, where the air is so pure, and the prospect so sublime, he regrets that he must descend, and leave the grand old heights perhaps forever: even so, after having been engaged so long in ascending this mount of God, upon the steps of each succeeding petition, until the last, the culminating one is reached, where the spiritual altitude is so high, and the breadth of view so immense, — the thought, that, after considering it, I must leave this sacred elevation, has caused me the sincerest regret.

But as he who has once studiously ascended a mountain, though he may never go up its sides again, will bear in his body the physical benefits of his toil, and in his memory and imagination the scenes he saw, and in his entire moral nature the general invigoration received, even so, I hope, that, although we may never again climb the sacred heights of this prayer, we may ever carry in our minds the truths, in our hearts the principles, we have contemplated, and that they may become formative and potent in all the developments of our future lives.

Perhaps you have observed that this closing portion of the model prayer, which is recorded by Matthew, is not found in Luke's record of it: but you must remember, that the former records it as given at a particular time and in special circumstances; while the latter records it as delivered at a different time and in different circumstances. The one was given in Galilee, the other in Judea. The one was unasked, the other requested by a disciple. The former was spoken when our Lord was preaching, the latter after he had been praying. The former was addressed to an indiscriminate mass of hearers, the latter to his disciples; and to them much other instruction was given as to the matter of prayer. And if you bear in mind that his design was, not so much to teach the matter as the manner of prayer, you will not be troubled by the omission of this portion of it in the record according to Luke.

You ought also to know that this portion is not found in some of the most ancient manuscript copies of Matthew's Gospel; and that therefore some do not receive it as part of the original prayer. Most Christians, however, do;

and with them I heartily concur, for the following reasons: —

1. While it is omitted in the Latin copies of the New Testament, it is found in the Syriac version, which is the oldest of all the versions, being traceable up to the earliest ages of the Christian Church. It is preserved also in the Arabic and other Oriental versions. It is also introduced into the earliest Greek liturgies.

2. We find similar expressions closing other prayers recorded in the Bible. The analogies, therefore, of inspired prayers manifestly favor the text as it stands.

3. It is a natural termination. It harmonizes grandly with all that precedes. As Calvin said, "It aptly fits."

4. If it was interpolated in the record of Matthew, why did the interpolator not add it to the record of Luke as well, and so make them uniform? He who would have done it in the one case had an additional motive for doing it in the other; and this is, to my mind, a moral demonstration, that there has been no interpolation at all, but that we have it recorded by Matthew just as our Lord delivered it in Galilee

and in Luke's Gospel just as he delivered it in Judea.

Some regard our text simply as a sublime form of praise and thanksgiving, appropriately accompanying the series of petitions. However true that may be, in my judgment it is not the direct or most prominent truth concerning it; nay, these expressions are chiefly a gathering-up, and earnest presentation of the reasons on account of which the petitions are urged. Thus viewed, the preposition "for" is causal in its nature. We express this whole process by the single word, *argument*. Proceed with me, then, to consider.

The Argument of the Lord's Prayer.

I. The history of all true prayer shows that God *has permitted the use of arguments*, in the sense of reasons, for the petitions offered. Do you remember that offered by Elijah, on the occasion of his controversy with the priests of Baal, when he prayed, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known, this day, that thou art God in Israel, that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

Hear me, O Lord! hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back again?" A similar use of persuasive argumentation is found in the prayer of Jehoshaphat, when the Moabites came against him to battle. And when Hezekiah received the threatening message of Assyria's proud king, he thus prayed: "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see, and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands; therefore they have destroyed them. *Now, therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand; that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only.*" Perhaps, however, the most impressive instance of this kind is found in the utterance of Job, when in great depression of soul, caused by providential circumstances, whose meaning he could not comprehend,

he exclaimed, "Oh that I knew where I might find him! I would come near, even to his seat. I would order my speech before him. *I would fill my mouth with arguments.*"

But, if you will study these prayers, you will discover that the reasons or the grounds on which they are urged are drawn from God himself. Hence, for "thy name's sake," "for thy glory," "for thy righteousness' sake," and similar expressions abound in them. "We do not," urged the captive suppliant in Babylon, "present our supplications before thee for our righteousness." Abraham urged, in his prayer for Sodom, that God "could not destroy the righteous with the wicked." That was pressing in prayer what had been revealed as characteristic of Jehovah. Moses grounded his intercession for idolatrous Israel on the divine honor and glory, when he said, "If thou smite this people, then the Egyptians shall hear of it, and tell it to the inhabitants of their land." And when Joshua, in great distress, rent his clothes, and fell upon his face before the ark, he prayed, "Alas, O Lord God! what shall I say when Israel turneth their back before their enemies? For the Canaanites and

the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it; *and what wilt thou do with thy great name?*" In all the ages, God's people, in order to obtain what they ask for from him, have gone out of the sphere of their own interests into the circle of his glory for the materials of their devotional argumentation. Thus we are here taught to pray, "Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. Give us our daily bread. Forgive our sins, as we forgive. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;" "for," because, "*thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*" Archbishop Leighton said, "Like the heavens, prayer hath a circular motion. Its inspiration, coming from God into the soul, returns back to him. You look upon the heavens. They are covered with rain-bearing clouds. Whence came they? From the evaporations of deep, broad seas. They fall in copious showers upon the earth. Whither go they? Evaporating from the land, gliding in brooks, rolling in rivers, they return to the sources whence they came. So does all true prayer." So does this model prayer especially. It begins with our Father, circles all human

duties and necessities, and then lovingly, adoringly, returns to him, and is lost amid the grandeurs of his character.

In a former lecture, I have called attention to the two clusters of petitions; but I must refer to them again in this connection. The first, regarding his name, his kingdom, and his will, exhibits the true ultimate objects of our existence. The second, regarding our temporal and spiritual necessities, exhibits the means by which we are kept in being, and enabled to realize those objects. Now observe the beautiful unity and logical force of this close of the prayer, in the fact, that the results of the accomplishment of these divinely-ordained life-objects are urged as the argument for granting the petition — "for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever."

II. Viewed as an argument, let us now *analyze these words.*

1. "Thine is the kingdom."

This is a recognition of Him as "The King eternal, immortal, and invisible," — "The King of kings, and Lord of lords." This is recog-

nizing him in his perfect, absolute sovereignty over the kingdoms of nature, providence, and grace, — over the entire universe. This is acknowledging him to be of right the ever-blessed supreme Potentate over heaven and earth. Oh, the truthfulness and adoring sublimity of this acknowledgment! To what an elevation it lifts the human mind, and what expansion is given to all its powers, to think of the sole sovereignty of God over matter and mind, men and nations, the world and systems of worlds. The old Roman boasted, that "the kingdom was Cæsar's," because his eagles, those imperial emblems of rapine, had swooped down upon so much of the habitable earth: but how much more is it God's, since he created it, upholds it, — God's, to whom the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; who taketh up the isles as a very little thing, stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, maketh the clouds his chariot, walketh upon the wings of the wind, and who is *terrible in majesty*." By him kings rule. Their crowns and sceptres all hang on

his footstool. He alone is supreme in that highest realm of humanity which embraces our conscience, hearts, reason, and will.

With this sublime truth before us, how blasphemous appear the pretensions of the pope, the imperial autocrat of Rome, who is endeavoring at this moment to induce a council of his own selection to decree to him that infallibility which belongs only to the King eternal! Think of a man arrayed in tawdry robes, and glittering with jewels, like a vain old woman, claiming supremacy over the human reason, conscience, and faith; dealing out powerless damnation against the civilization of the age, and all who will not submit to his authority; claiming that all power, by inherent divine right, is concentrated in the Romish Church, of which he is the head; that legitimate authority is not vested in the people, nor secular monarchs, but in himself; that to him all human authorities owe their highest allegiance; that he alone is entitled to reign over the kingdom of human souls; and that he is infallible in his government. Is not this a literal fulfilment of the prophecy found in the Second

Epistle to the Thessalonians, second chapter, third and fourth verses, where we read, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and *that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God?*" Surely this is "the *mystery of iniquity*," of which the apostle speaks, "which doth already work" until "that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

We are, however, in danger of doing the same thing ourselves, by allowing the depravity of our individual souls to throw off allegiance to God, and assert either theoretically or practically our independence of him. So also nationally, we who have breathed the free air of liberty from our cradles, and who so sturdily resist all tyranny in State or Church, and talk so boastingly about "the sovereignty of the people," are in danger of forgetting the sphere and limitations of that sovereignty; that it ex-

tends neither to the human reason, conscience, nor heart; that all human laws ought to be conformed to, and must be subordinated to, the higher law of the "most high God." For every particle of matter, every event in providence, every intuition of right reason, every impulse of a good conscience, every element of right, truth, and justice, and every teaching of the Bible, join with the pious heart in exclaiming, "Thine is the kingdom! thine are its resources! thou art God over all!" Do you see the point of this as an argument? That point is seen in the fact, so adoringly urged to our Father, that because his sovereignty embraces all the matters to which the petitions refer, because they are all within the sphere of his own kingdom, therefore he, as absolute Sovereign, is urged to grant them.

2. "Thine is the power."

Observe the generality of this word. There are different kinds of power, — physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Created beings may have one kind and not another; and, whatever they have, it is derived and limited. But this adoring plea saith, Thine is *the power*, —

power of all kinds, underivedly, absolutely, illimitably. Our Father is "the Almighty:" he is "the Lord God omnipotent," — the "Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength." "He hath an arm that is full of power: strong is his hand, and high is his right hand." We read of the *thunder of his power*. "Whatsoever his soul desireth, that he doeth." He speaks, and it is done: he commands, and it stands fast. There is a tendency, in our times, to deify the powers of nature; whereas, they are nothing but God's energy, operating along the line of his own laws. Men, institutions, and governments are mighty; but their mightiness is all derived from him. From his central throne his voice reverberates through the universe, saying, "I am the Almighty God!" — "the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth; who fainteth not, neither is weary."

Do you perceive the argumentative force of this? Oh! it is saying, 'Thou hast power to enable us to hallow thy name; power to cause thy kingdom to come; power to sweetly subdue all wills to thy will; power over nature, over our dispositions and activities, so as to give us

our daily bread; power to make us so conscious of the heinousness of our sins as to cry for forgiveness within the assigned limit, and to pardon all our guilt; power to lead us not into temptation, and power to deliver us from all evil!" Oh! it is confessing our weakness, and laying hold of his omnipotence. It is urging, that the ability to do what he requires, and what we know we ought to do, must come from himself. It is our weakness, grasping that in our Father by which he is able to do exceeding above all that we can ask or think.

Alexander the Great was so pleased with Anaxarchus, the philosopher, that he bade him go to his treasurer, and ask for any sum of money he pleased. The philosopher was a poor man, and, availing himself of the rare opportunity, demanded, in the sovereign's name, ten thousand pounds. Greatly surprised, the treasurer refused the request, and waited upon the king, representing to him the unreasonableness of the petition, as seen in the exorbitancy of the sum asked, and concluded by saying, that "it seemed too much for any one man to receive." Alexander heard him patiently, but

royally replied, "Let the money be instantly paid. It is not too much for the king to give. *He has signally honored both my superior wealth and royal munificence by the largeness of his request.*" But what was either the wealth or liberality of the Greek king compared with the infinitude of both possessed by our Father in heaven? Therefore, "Ask, and ye shall receive." What is asked may be vastly more than we deserve; but we cannot ask more than he is abundantly able to grant. Therefore "every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth." "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?"

3. "Thine is the glory."

In this we have the logical culmination of the argumentative plea of the Lord's Prayer. Beginning with the fact of his sovereignty, passing to the fact of his omnipotence in the universal realm of his sovereignty, the argument culminates in the sublime fact, that all the results which shall follow the answers to these seven petitions shall glorify himself, "the King

of glory." It is urging that the glory which shall accrue from hallowing thy name, from the coming of thy kingdom, from the doing of thy will, from the sustainment of our bodies, the forgiveness of sins, and our preservation from the evil of temptation shall all be thine own forever. Oh! it is saying, "Our Father, the glory not only rightfully belongs to thee, but we are willing, yea, desirous, that it should be thine. We ask nothing for ourselves. All our good is bound up in thy glory. With all thy redeemed children, we joyfully exclaim, 'Blessed be thy glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with thy glory.' From our heart of hearts we cry, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory, for ever and ever." "Unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, — unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." We read, in ancient story, of a great conqueror, who, amid the pomp and grandeur of a stately triumph, was asked by one of his courtiers "*if any thing*

was yet wanting." Mournfully the conqueror surveyed the gorgeous pageant, and then sorrowfully replied, "One thing is wanting, — continuance." Beloved, the kingdom of our Father can never be shaken: his power is inexhaustible: his glory is everlasting. What a word is that "*forever*"! Nothing can increase, nothing diminish, nothing can change, the eternal, ineffable glory of Him who is "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." "He shall reign King forever." Thus the argument culminates in the glory of God as the crowning chapter of its column, — the pinnacle which gives finish and symmetry to its pyramid.

4. The argument closes with the single word "Amen."

That untranslated word gathers up and concentrates in itself the whole prayer, and says, *So may it be.* In using it, we express our cordial assent to all that has gone before, our earnest desire that the arguments may avail, and the petitions be granted. And more than even this. There is involved the element of hope and assurance that they will be. The word "Amen" was often used by our Saviour as an oath, attesting sincerity.

It comes from the same root as the Hebrew word for faith; and thus it expresses confidence in our Father's ability, and willingness to hear and answer the petitions which his own Spirit indited, and his own Son taught us to offer. This sacred word is the seal with which the devout soul seals its prayerful missive to heaven. Thus the prayer closes; and it is left with God. Luther said, "The true Christian prays an everlasting Lord's Prayer."

In concluding this course of lectures, permit a few closing words.

1. *I hope this prayer will be to you hereafter more than it ever was before.*

I am conscious of having developed only its surface richness, and that there are depths, breadths, and heights of truth in it which we have not reached. But I trust that our studies of it, superficial as they may have been, will make it more solemnly beautiful, more tenderly interesting, and more grandly prayerful to us, than it ever was before. Let us shrink from its thoughtless repetition; let us feel more and more the need of the enlightening and assisting influence of the Holy Spirit, in order to compre-

hend and offer it acceptably, heeding the apostolic injunctions, "Building yourselves up one your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost;" "Praying always with all prayer, and supplications in the Spirit." The aid of the Spirit is the promise of the Father, and the purchase of his Son. An essential part of his ministry is "to help our infirmities," "guide us into all truth," "take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us," and to nourish within us that spirituality which is essential to all acceptable prayer. Thus assisted, we shall comprehend more and more this sublime composition; and, while our minds perceive its immense fulness and riches, our hearts shall more and more earnestly, lovingly, believingly, and persistently offer its petitions and urge its argument. Thus we shall come into closer and closer affinity with the sacramental host of God's elect of all the ages, and more and more honor him who taught us thus to pray.

2. *A closing word to those who never pray this or any other prayer.*

It is a lamentable fact, that there are multitudes of such, — yes, multitudes, — who,

although created and sustained by God, dwelling on his earth, breathing his air, living upon his bounty, dependent upon him for all they enjoy, and responsible to him, moving constantly towards his judgment-seat, who yet *never speak to God at all*, — have nothing to say to him. Oh! is it any wonder, that, when such shall stand before the great white throne, they shall be "speechless" there? Are you of such? Are you leading a prayerless life? Do you never, never, speak to God, — never thank him for his mercies, never implore his assistance, never ask pardon for a single sin? Are you of those who never call him "Father;" who do not hallow his name, who oppose his kingdom, resist his will, practically deny his relation to your daily food, seek no forgiveness, and ask no deliverance from evil? Fearfully, criminally, guilty is your position. Will you remain in it? Are you determined to go prayerlessly through life, down to your graves, and up to God? Friends, by so doing, you are not only insulting Heaven, defying omnipotence, rejecting the infinite riches of grace in Christ Jesus, but you are treasuring up sorrow against the day of sorrow, wrath

against the day of wrath. Listen to my closing word to you. *Bow and pray.* The Hearer waits to hear. Take to yourself these words, and say, "I will arise, and go unto my Father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.'" And oh how joyfully you shall be received!

3. *A closing word to those who do pray.*

Has not the greatness of this privilege and the importance of this duty grown upon you, as we have progressed in these studies? Do we not feel disposed to pray more, and to more closely conform our petitions, both in matter and manner, to this model prayer? Surely as we remember how we have performed this exercise oftentimes in the past, we must all feel deeply mortified, and not at all surprised, that such small results have followed. Let the words, "After this manner pray ye," abide with us; and then we shall be very humble, direct, earnest, comprehensive, and brief in all our prayers.

Let David's resolution be ours, when he said, "I give myself unto prayer;" by which he pur-

posed, that no obstacle should stand in the way of the performance of this primal duty, the enjoyment of this sublimest privilege, which he felt to be the very breath, solace, and stay of his life. Truthfully Cowper sang, —

" What various hindrances we meet
In coming to a mercy-seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer
But wishes to be often there?

Prayer makes the darkened clouds withdraw;
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;
Gives exercise to faith and love;
Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

Have you no words? Ah, think again!
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill a fellow-creature's ear
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Our cheerful song would oftener be,
'Hear what the Lord hath done for me.' "

Brethren, this world is the only place for prayer; and we shall all soon leave it. As it was said of the sweet singer of Israel, so it will soon be said of us, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended."

REPAIRED BY
BOB ARMSTRONG
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